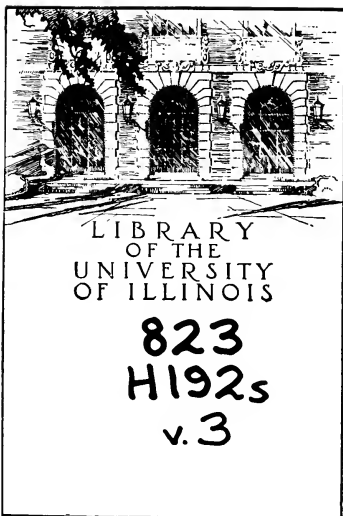


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SINGLETON FONTENOY, R.N.

BY JAMES HANNAY,

(LATE OF HER MAJESTY'S NAVY.)

AUTHOR OF "SKETCHES IN ULTRA-MARINE," ETC.

Employons à nous rendre bons et heureux le temps qu'ils perdent à chercher comment on doit l'être, et proposons-nous de grands exemples à imiter plutôt que de vains systèmes à suivre.

J'ai toujours cru que le bon n'était que le beau mis en action.

ROUSSEAU.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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Book IV.

HOME.

That species of information which is called knowledge of the world will be found much more likely to make men cunning than good.

DR. JOHNSON.



SINGLETON FONTENOY, R.N.

CHAPTER I.

And hear'st thou, and fear'st thou,
And fear'st thou, and hear'st thou ?
And drive we not free,
O'er this terrible sea,
I and thou ?

SHELLEY.

It is a dark and stormy night ; the wind is howling a death-rattle through the throat of the Channel. Heavy line-of-battle ships lie doggedly, three anchors down, cables veered out, lower yards and topmasts struck, in the Sound. It is a night when seamen swear and women pray !

It was especially bad in the throat of the

Channel ; the moon was at her full, and had driven the ocean mad ; the wind tore up and down the black waters, and every now and then, a crash of thunder rolled all round Heaven.

Presently the moon rolls grandly out from behind a black cloud, as if she had just been shot, all fiery, for the first time into space. By her light, which streams in a golden oil over the waves—a brig is made visible. Stunted-looking, with top-gallant-masts down—bare and ragged, with close-reefed main-topsail and storm-trysails,—she labours heavily and sulkily along. It is H. M.'s brig "Viper," and this is her welcome home ! let us transport ourselves on board.

Welwyn in his cabin, muffled in a huge coat, with a tarpaulin hat on, takes the lantern and looks at the barometer,—no change,—the mercury is cowering low down. Welwyn feels the brig jump and tremble as the waves thump against her ribs, he buttons his coat resolutely, and pushes up the narrow companion-ladder ; a flash of lightning meets him on deck. As he reaches the weather-

gangway—bang! bang! goes the brig's head against the water, a sea breaks, and hissing down heavily, wets everything fore and aft with one tremendous shower.

"Ugh, ugh!" said Mr. Block, the master, who was in charge of the watch; "a man might as well be a Newfoundland dog." The brig here plunged and kicked.

"What do you think of it?" asked Welwyn, looking drearily to windward.

"Bad, bad, bad!" said Block, shaking his head. "It's blowing great guns, and I've nothing to oppose to it but a pocket-pistol."

Here the brig kicked again, as if disgusted at the master's joke; Mr. Block pulled out the pocket-pistol in question, and drank some brandy.

"If we knew where we were," said Welwyn, rather uneasily.

"Let's heave the deep-sea lead!" suggested the master.

"Watch, heave the deep-sea lead!"

The men began to crawl out from where they were huddled, under the top-gallant forecastle,—the heavy lead was produced and

armed,—the line was passed along fore and aft.

“Let go! Watch there, watch!” passed from one end of the brig to the other. The lead plunged, the line whizzed, the reel span,—presently it was hoisted up again,—a lantern was brought,—Block inspected the armed end of the dripping traveller.

“Well,—what does it say?”

Block paused. “We must be cursed near the coast of France,” he said.

“I’ll wear, and lay to,” said Welwyn, with calm decision; “turn up, everybody—wear ship.” He seized a speaking-trumpet—the men trudged to their places.

The helm was gradually put up, and the weather-braces rounded in,—the brig’s head fell off from the wind,—then, she gave a swoop to leeward, and seemed preparing to fly a-head; a sea, meanwhile, gave her a slap a-stern, and flung the little dingy that hung there, on board in a twinkling. But she rounded to on the other tack quietly, and having been a long time struck on the star-board bow, held the larboard to the sea, in

return, with great resignation,—and now there was nothing to do but to keep a good look-out, and wait for morning. The brig rose and fell doggedly, but stuck to her place.

Welwyn waited on deck a long time, but there was no change. At last he thought he might retire to his cabin, for a little rest,—he left word that he was to be called at daylight, and lay down on his cot.

Daylight came—as it comes after stormy nights—sullen, gradual, and grey; the sea dawned into a kind of ashen light—dirty and sickly-looking,—it foamed like a huge ocean of porter; the seamen began to move about the soaked deck, weary, wet, and wrinkled.

The wind moderated; they bore up on their course, after some consultation between Welwyn and the master. They shook a reef out of the main-topsail, and set the reefed foresail. The brig vibrated and leapt along, shuddering and rolling; Welwyn's servant crawled up with some coffee. He sat down on the stern-grating to sip it, when the look-out man cried "a sail."

"Take the glass, and look at her Quarter-

master," said Welwyn, sipping the hot coffee. "A homeward bound Indiaman likely."

The Quartermaster looked, and muttered something or other.

"Why, she seems in distress," he said.

Welwyn got up, and looked in the direction to leeward, that had been indicated. As the brig neared, there to be sure, was a craft—a poor, maimed yacht, with her beautiful wings clipped, and looking like a wounded butterfly. It was a real object of nautical sympathy to a moralizing man.

The Quartermaster did not share the feeling much, apparently, for he growled out that he wondered what business they had out on such a night, and that it "was a tempting of Providence." In the eyes of a quartermaster, Providence has the sympathies and feelings of a post-captain. But such notions are not confined to such classes. I fancy we most of us judge Providence according to notions of our own.

"We must run down to them," muttered Welwyn. The weather was still moderating, luckily. The brig "kept away" a little, and started with fresh speed. As they neared the

yacht, she seemed more and more helpless. She was a beautiful schooner, and her line of copper flashed as she rose every now and then on the waves. But her masts were broken, and she had a jury rudder.

Welwyn took the speaking-trumpet, and hailed her. There was no answer. They saw nobody. The schooner rose and fell, and seemed helpless. Presently, however, a hand waved something above the bulwarks. It looked like a flag, or a piece of silk.

Welwyn and Mr. Block were watching her from the lee gangway. The brig had hove to, to windward.

"It's a d—d pretty wreck," said the master, sentimentally.

"Shall we send a boat?" inquired Welwyn.

"In this sea?"

"It is not so bad as it was. I'll go," said the youthful commander.

A boat was got out, and manned with a picked crew. She put off—Welwyn aft, with a keen eye and an intrepid heart, guiding the coxswain. The boat plunged, but she was well managed. She drew near the schooner. A

line was passed, and Welwyn and some of the boat's crew got on board over the stern. The first object they encountered was the figure of a man lying rolled up, with a red nightcap on, apparently asleep. The coxswain went to him, and shook him.

"All—right—old—fellow," muttered the sleeper. The "Viper's" men began to laugh. "He's drunk, sir," said the coxswain, to Welwyn.

Welwyn moved on—found some more of the crew in the same state. He set his men to work to repair the schooner's damages, as well as it could be done. Then he descended into the yacht's cabin.

It was a melancholy scene that met his eyes. The floor was strewn with the wrecks of shattered luxury,—shivered mirrors, spilled wine, crystal, and silver,—and crushed flowers, and spoiled books and prints,—porcelain that had crumbled into gold dust, and fragments of glass sparkling like beads. The air was heavy and close. The panels of the bulwarks were defaced; the green silk curtains lay in fragments on the floor. And Welwyn's eye caught

a soiled, white, small glove, lying like a smashed lily.

He stood for a moment in astonishment. Then, putting his head up the ladder, he ordered the cabin skylight to be opened. As he called out, he heard a noise in an inner cabin. The door suddenly opened—

“Great heaven — where is my father? And Welwyn saw a tall and beautiful girl, wrapped in an enormous shawl, and with her hair hanging, in wild black ringlets, down. Her face was pale with terror and anxiety, her eyes painfully bright.

“All is safe,” said Welwyn, hurriedly. “I have come from Her Majesty’s brig ‘Viper’ to take charge of the yacht. The gale is over.”

The girl blushed suddenly red. Welwyn stooped down, and began picking up the fragments of the broken things, to avoid causing her any disagreeable confusion. At that instant, the fresh air and light came from the opened skylight, most gratefully, and a great rich gleam of sunshine lighted up the cabin.

Welwyn thought it best to go on deck for a

little. The brig's men were busy putting things to rights. The weather was fast moderating, still, and sail being made, the schooner began to move through the water, towing the "Viper's" boat astern. A little boy, apparently a cabin servant, was running about on deck. Welwyn called him—

"Who does this yacht belong to, my boy?"

"Mr. Lepel, sir. It was not his fault, sir."

Here the boy looked frightened, being apparently afraid that his master would be subjected to castigation by the naval authorities.

Welwyn smiled. "But what brought the yacht into this state?"

The boy went on to tell him, that the schooner had left Plymouth Sound, on a cruise, a few days before; that the gale had blown them off the shore; that the sailing-master in charge had been taken ill (which meant, had got drunk); and so the yacht had soon become helpless.

As he finished the narration, the master came up to Welwyn, very coolly. He rubbed his eyes—"Ah, leeftenant; a roughish breeze

we've had, ain't we? I s'pose you'll leave us, now we're all right agin!"

"Certainly not. The schooner being in distress, we take charge of her," said Welwyn, quietly. And he turned away his head, and looked at the brig, which had made sail, and was standing-on in a line with them. The master kept, however, standing close to Welwyn, with his eyes fixed on him, and his hands deep in his pockets.

"Want the salvage, s'pose, leeftenant, eh?" he said, twiddling his thumbs, which were outside his pockets, like crab's claws.

"I have answered you," said Welwyn, turning away his head.

The man stood immoveable, grinning, with eyes fixed on him, and moving the hideous red thumbs as before.

"Eh, leeftenant, he! he!" he began.

But just then, the coxswain, who had been watching the proceedings with great disgust, and was aware of Welwyn's quietness, suddenly came behind the master, and seizing him by the collar, hurled him on one side. The master gave the same stupid leer, and

presently composed himself once more to slumber.

Welwyn sent the boy down into the cabin, to inquire after the gentleman and his daughter. It was only his duty!

Back came a message, "Would he come down?"

"Collins," said Welwyn to his coxswain, "keep the schooner on in the brig's track. Let the hands refit the rigging, and so forth."

He went down the ladder to the cabin again. Things were, by this time, pretty well put to rights. There were sitting at the table, our old friend Mr. Lepel, and Augusta. Mr. Lepel was older and feebler than when we saw him last, in appearance, and alas! in reality, too! Augusta was—Augusta. What more can we say? A little taller and more graceful—a little milder and more intellectual—with brow all thought, and eyes all mind, she looked like what she was—a cultivated English girl!

"We owe our safety to you, sir," said Mr. Lepel.

"We had, certainly, a rather rough night,"

said Welwyn, smiling; "but these are our common duties in our profession. Happy those whose duties are such that they must naturally be their greatest pleasures, too!"

Poor Welwyn had not found that such was always the case. But the sentiment occurred to him, and he wished to please those he was with.

Augusta looked at him with some surprise. "I think you said your brig was called the "Viper?"

Welwyn bowed.

"Then surely, papa," cried Augusta, turning to her father, "was not little Fontenoy in that vessel?"

Welwyn smiled. "I can answer that; he was; he left us at Malta just before we sailed."

And then there occurred a long interchange of questions and answers, concerning my hero, of whom Welwyn spoke, as he thought, with great esteem and attachment. This led to more intimate communion between him and the Lepels, and they invited him to visit them at Plymouth. Shortly afterwards, Welwyn

returned to the brig, leaving the coxswain and some hands on board the yacht.

The vessels anchored in Plymouth Sound next morning.

And now Welwyn was plunged into the business of paying off the brig, and was deep into the news of the navy. The Admiralty sent him down his promotion to the rank of Lieutenant, and he received a letter from a high authority, complimenting him on his conduct while in the "Viper."

Plymouth was as lively as usual, full of naval men "mooning" about Union Street, &c. &c. A most interesting court-martial was being held on board the flag-ship, upon Snoggles of the "Beaver," a lieutenant, who during the recent gale, had reported the sheet-anchor ready for letting go, at a time when about twenty seamen and their wives were suspended on it, in their connubial hammocks. A happy accident prevented Snoggles' report from being acted upon, otherwise, the persons most ignorant of naval matters in the country, must be

able to guess what a frightful doom would have befallen the slumbering couples.

Snoggles was tried—took the affair very coolly—made a sarcastic defence, with many damning exposures of the discipline of the “Beaver”—and was sentenced to be put “at the bottom of the list of lieutenants,” a post for which he had been sedulously qualifying himself for many years! Sentence having been duly passed, the philosophic Snoggles departed to the continent, there to live quietly on his private means, and his 4s. per diem, half-pay; and may be seen, I am informed, by the curious, at most of the places of note frequented by English travellers abroad.

The “Viper” was soon paid off. Brunt hurried up to London to prepare his work on the Plague, and to enjoy the luxury of dissection, of which he had been so long deprived.

One morning, Welwyn went to the hotel where the Lepels were staying.

“Ah, Mr. Welwyn,” said the old gentleman, “we thought you had forgotten us. I have disposed of my yacht, and we are going home

to Rockshire ; will you come down and visit us there ?”

Welwyn paused. He glanced at Augusta, but she was looking out of the window, and playing with her gold chain.

“ You are very kind,” he said, “ but I must first go to some relations. But I will join you afterwards, there, with pleasure.”

The door opened. “ Well, Fred ?” said Mr. Lepel. Welwyn saw a young man, who had obviously just arrived by the coach, enter the room.

“ How do, sir—how are you, Augusta ? It’s very chilly, this morning. Awfully cold I was, coming down in the coach, and perched opposite a methodist parson. Freezing !”

Mr. Lepel, junior, here removed his cashmere handkerchief, and looked at Welwyn.

“ Lieutenant Welwyn—my son Frederick. This is the gentleman who saved us, you know, Fred,” said Mr. Lepel.

“ Very glad to see you, Mr. Welwyn,” said the philosophical radical and Alcibiades of the Manchester School, “ I must have a talk with you about the navy estimates !” He spoke

this, with that fatherly air which young gentlemen who are getting on precociously in the world assume towards their coevals. His sister glanced quietly at Welwyn, who bowed. Welwyn fell into the mistake common to persons of the idealist and romantic class of intellect—of looking down on the practical class. The fact is, the latter have not only their own cleverness to go upon, but the world's cleverness to back them.

“That was a dreadful scene!” said old Mr. Lepel, reverting (as he was apt to do) to the gale. “What a night that was!”

“Ah—you must have found it infernally cold!” said Frederick, moving close to the fire. “When will the *Times* be down?”

CHAPTER II.

And the Raven never flitting, still is sitting, still is
sitting,
On the pallid bust of Pallas, just above my chamber
door,
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is
dreaming,
And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his
shadow on the floor,
And my soul from out that shadow, that lies floating
on the floor,

Shall be lifted—nevermore !

“The Raven,” by EDGAR A. POE.

As Frederick spoke, he warmed his hands with that hearty relish for physical comfort which most demagogues have. Since we last saw him he had been “getting on” famously.

He was "up" in all sorts of facts, and was considered a very promising young man. A London wit described him as one of those youths who wear white chokers and marry widows. One meets such gentlemen about—very quick and penetrating—very ready and sarcastic—more intimate with their elders than with people of their own years—reducing everything to utility, and never even reading without a distinct view to material gain.

Frederick, I say, warmed his hands with a hearty relish. By little and little, I must add, he was growing more selfish—but it was that kind of selfishness which is never seen in particular instances. You don't find it out, for a long time, and by the aggregation of many cases—and then the harm, whatever it may be, of the acquaintance, is done!

"Yes—very cold it must have been," he added, vaguely, for his thoughts were wandering somewhere else. Again Augusta glanced at Welwyn. Mr. Lepel, who had a wonderful opinion of his son, smiled.

"Let me see," said Frederick, standing up—right before the fire, with a parliamentary air,

"I never come anywhere without seeing what there is to be seen. Mr. Welwyn, will you come over the Dockyard with me."

Welwyn consented, and they left the hotel together. They entered the Dockyard, and inspected the various parts of it. Everywhere Frederick was keen-sighted—calculating expenses, viewing improvements, and pondering on alterations. Welwyn, who looked at things from a totally different point of view, seemed silent and stupid. Frederick made various experiments on him. It was his way. He regularly investigated and classified every new friend.

As they were standing looking at some patent anchors—a recent invention—a gang of convicts passed.

"Look there," said Frederick, moralizing. "A very important question is convict labour. Now these poor devils there are criminals by necessity. Statistics show that there will be so much crime, just as there will be so much grass or cabbage, per year. They can't help themselves. Then, consider the particular social influences—poverty, ignorance (and

Toryism, added Frederick, with a grin)—and what right have we to punish them? Our primary duty is reform.”

Welwyn looked thoughtful. “It is very melancholy. Every one of these beings is a dormant good man. By nature, each is a possible goodness. An impulse of the soul might transform any one of them.”

Frederick coughed—an under-secretary-receiving-a-deputation sort of cough—and pulled out a snuff-box. He had recently taken to snuff, and used dandiacal mixtures.

“Ah! you are a Reformer, then, like myself,” he said, scarcely knowing what to say.

“I am not a Reformer, but I admire reform,” said Welwyn. (“A Conservative Trimmer,” thought Lepel.) “I am an optimist, I confess, in spite of *Rasselas* and *Candide*. Everything will come right.”

“You believe in Peel?” said Frederick; the time being that of his administration.

“Chiefly in Providence,” said Welwyn, with one of his grave smiles.

Frederick laughed, and thought him a mys-

tical sort of fellow, with some brains. They walked along, and came to a gigantic shed, where there was a line-of-battle ship on the stocks. The name of Hildebrand was painted over her "120." In her then state, with her mighty ribs bare, she looked like the skeleton of a mammoth.

"There goes the public money," said Frederick, with a laugh. "What think you of our naval expenditure?"

"It has never occupied my attention much. Do you know it appears to me that an officer who is always thinking more of reforming his business than of *doing* it as he finds it, is not the best possible."

"By Jove," said Frederick, "I'd fling that in Charley Napier's teeth, if I was on the Treasury Bench. But, you know, such ideas would stop all reform."

"Somehow I don't like the practice of reform, as it is carried on in this country," said Welwyn, musingly; and they turned away from the shed.

A party of *matys* were crossing just before them.

"Now, these seem intelligent, active men," said Welwyn.

"Yes—and every man of them has a vote, sir!" said Frederick. ("A biped with a vote" would be an accurate definition of *homo*, according to the creed of some people.)

They passed out of the gates, and returned to the hotel. Frederick, as they walked along, talked a great deal more about Reform and Reformers.

"I tell you what I think of the Reformers," said Welwyn, smiling.

"Well?" said Frederick, with curiosity.

"Oh! no—it's of no consequence," said Welwyn, correcting himself, and feeling, perhaps, that he was stirring from his serene tranquility by even giving an opinion.

"Tell me," said Frederick, pausing on the foot of the stairs.

"That the country is suffering from disease of the heart, and that their treatment is to crop its hair and beard!"

"Well, we will do it close, you'll see." And they moved on up stairs. Welwyn stayed to dinner, and went in the evening

to a party at the Port Admiral's. Next morning, he started with the Lepels, by coach, to Exeter.

London ! "Jolly old London," as Washington Irving well calls it. "The best place in summer, and the only place in winter," as James Smith, also, did reasonably say. To Welwyn, it was a grand dream—a floating cloud with a million of figures—he cared nothing to stay or to examine it. He went, *pro tem.*, to Hatchett's—Mr. Lepel and his daughter started for the North—Frederick remained in lodgings in Grosvenor-street. Frederick was busy !

Welwyn had little to do. He went to the Admiralty ; he went to his agent's. In the whole town, he had not a friend, and he had not that acquaintance with London, which, joined with a philosophical spirit, makes the town itself a society.

What did Welwyn care for a town which neglected Swedenborg, and idolized George Brummell ? To be sure, there were some naval men about — there were some at

Hatchett's. These, however, were generally youths who were going through the orthodox course—who had come of age—dropped into moderate patrimonies—started cabs and tigers—and were laying in a stock of poverty and anecdotes, for their next cruise. Then, there were some men, he knew, of another class—steady old Lieutenants, who lived near the Strand, and dined at the Crown, in Rupert-street. Red-faced old gentlemen, who took a little wine, and a great deal of rum-and-water, and looked at the *Navy List*, and talked about Jellicoe and Bird Allen. What had Welwyn to say to them ?

Frederick Lepel was in London, to be sure. Welwyn did not care for his society. But here was the difference between them—Lepel liked him well enough. They differed, radically, in character, but here was the superiority (if so it may be called) of the practical man, that he availed himself with equal indifference of everybody—being always bent on his career, more than his individuality,—while Welwyn esteemed the maintenance of *his*

spiritual individuality a matter of principle. The distinction is worth studying.

One day, Welwyn was coming up Parliament-street, having been musing in Poet's Corner for an hour, when he perceived a Hansom cab, rushing violently towards his side of the pavement. He caught the features of Mr. Frederick Lepel, who waved his hand, and made a gesture to him to stop. Frederick patronized Hansom cabs very much, being of opinion, that in safety, rapidity, and compactness, the Hansom was a type of modern civilization. He had given up his Brougham, impelled, as he said, by economy, but as he spent the money in other ways, this was no great saving. He was not the man to expend anything for the sake of show—and besides, show was only necessary to supply the want of substance. Solid, industrious young gentlemen of brains had no need of it, he reflected.

“Come in!” he cried, as the cab drew up. Welwyn sprang in, without much consideration, and away they rattled.

"You seemed very gloomy. Have you no friends in London?" Frederick asked.

"No," said Welwyn.

"It is very empty just now, certainly—though as the Duke of Queensberry used to say, 'it's fuller than the country!' Come to my rooms."

The cab stopped. They jumped out. The door was opened by Lepel's servant, and they went up stairs. Frederick occupied a drawing-room floor in the house. There were one or two busts in the room they went into—an engraving of "John signing Magna Charta"—ditto of the "American Declaration of Independence,"—and the "Death Warrant of Charles the First." A plain oblong table occupied the centre of the room, and at one end of it was a waste-paper basket big enough for a Druidical *auto-da-fé*. There were two well-filled book-cases, and there were heaps of papers and pamphlets of all sorts—"Letters to a noble Lord," and "Remarks on the present Crisis," &c., scattered about—also, Minutes of the House and Parliamentary documents.

"Excuse me," said Frederick; and he began to open some letters, from which it might have been conjectured that he had not slept at home the night before.

But Welwyn had seen the "Death Warrant," and his thoughts were wandering back to the day when Whitehall witnessed the terrible expiation of all the follies and falsifications of that King, from whose blood, like to the blood of Ajax, sprang the flower—English liberty.

He was startled from his reverie by a sharp "Tish" from Lepel. Lepel laid down a letter which he was reading, and looked up. He rose from his chair.

"Well, it is certainly odd how things come about. It is the strangest thing that I should have met you on this very day of all days."

Here he rang the bell.

"Charles, I shall dine at home."

"Yes, sir."

"Wait a minute. Mr. Welwyn, had not you better stay, if you have no engagement?"

Welwyn thought of the coffee-room at Hatchett's—the noisy man, who usually dined

opposite him—the fat old country gentleman, who wrangled with the waiter about the Port till he was “red in the face,” having been previously more than red in that part of it called the nose—and accepted.

“I have asked three or four quiet men to-day,” said Frederick. “Well—make it all right,” he said, dismissing the servant.

Frederick’s business habits did not extend to domestic details. So long as he had what he wanted, he let his servant do what he pleased, and was plundered, not from ignorance, but because he could not be bored about small matters; though, perhaps, he never attained the sublime indifference to personal economy of the distinguished Alfred Bethnall Green, Esq. (who was often at Dunreddin), who usually went to M——’s at the beginning of the season, and gave him £2000, with instructions to “make it go as far as he could,” which, we may be sure, was not very far, at Green’s favourite pace.

When the servant left the room, Lepel resumed. He took the letter up, and threw it down again.

"This is from Mr. Fontenoy. You knew the son in the 'Viper,' did you not?"

"Certainly I did," said Welwyn, with some surprise.

"Was he going on curiously? When I used to see a good deal of him, he was a promising fellow enough; but had what I call a mental green-sickness—a sort of disorder of the imagination and unhealthiness of the intellect—which resulted in desultory exertions and transient attachments."

Welwyn was somewhat struck by this little speech. All the external liveliness of Lepel which belonged to his temperament vanished while he was making it. He looked intelligent, serious, and sensible, giving an idea of what might be expected of him in his earnest and aspiring hour.

"There was nothing very curious about him that I remember," said Welwyn, quietly. "He was not like very ordinary persons certainly, for it seemed to me that he was of imaginative tendencies; and as they develop themselves before the mind is thoroughly formed, the

youth of those who have them is sometimes what is called eccentric."

"Well," Lepel said, "do the imaginative tendencies make people buy the favourites for garrison races, and raise money from Maltese money-lenders?"

Welwyn drew himself up with surprise.

"I should hope not."

"Fontenoy has been doing it, then," said Lepel, taking up the letter once more. Welwyn made a gesture to take it. Frederick turned down the part alluded to, and pointed out the words. Welwyn read, and was astonished.

"That is what dullards call 'sowing their wild oats,'" said Lepel, who seemed very much annoyed.

"It is a vulgar phrase, to describe a vulgar thing," said Welwyn.

"D—n it!" said Lepel, muttering some words to himself. And then he went on with the letter.

"Now, this *is* rich, ha! ha!" he exclaimed.

"What?" said Welwyn, drumming nervously with his fingers on the table.

"There is a postscript which says that he

has taken a new whim. Nothing will suit him now but Roman Catholic haunts. So, his father learns from a friend in the island. 'Gad, this reminds me of Hoggles, of the "Weekly Rattler," who, on the Pope's death, t'other day, sent round a card with

HOGGLES FOR POPE!

on it!"

Welwyn was in no mood for a joke. He looked very grave and sad.

"I tell you what," said Lepel, "you're only his messmate, and, of course, don't know all about him; but I suspect ——"

Welwyn was on the point of stopping him, but had not the courage.

"I suspect there was some mystery about his mother which may be influencing him now."

Welwyn coloured very deeply. Lepel's keen glance lighted upon him. "Ah!" thought Frederick, "he knows something of it." But Frederick did not guess how much, or how deeply the fortunes of Welwyn and Singleton

were intertwined, or that it was blood of Singleton's that was blushing in the face before him, or that *his* projects would be influenced by the circumstances which he was thinking of!

The servant came to lay the cloth. They went into another room to wash their hands. On their return, the men who had been invited were assembling. They were chiefly members of that large class of young gentlemen who are thronging the gates of the professions now—offshoots from old families from which the younger branches are getting more and more distant every generation—cousins and second cousins of great people who are not aware of their existence, but whose pedigrees, arms, and connexions, these young gentlemen have at their fingers' ends. Conservative by hereditary sympathy, and yet liberal by education and aspiration, why should not this class be a most important element in the work of the future? Yet everybody seems to be more active—more influential in this country—than a youth of the better orders. Some thousands of the best educated, and the most *avancés* youths of the day, are by their own supineness, and the pre-

sent state of the suffrage, excluded from all share in the conduct of the State. I suppose, for example, that a hundred of the mob vote for every artist or student—that twenty coal-whippers have more votes amongst them than fifty average readers of Tacitus and Carlyle!

Among the guests, was our former acquaintance, Mr. Bones, of Oxford, who had now gradually developed into one of those portentous unions of dandyism and Puseyism, which amuse the philosopher in Pall Mall—tailor-made saints—trying to be enthusiasts, with half misgivings that they are fools,—disciples of a system, two parts credulity and one part affectation!

There was a young barrister who had written a pamphlet, and wore spectacles; there was the brother of a liberal member; there was a statist in *embryo*; there was a leading-article man. All more or less clever—all working men, and pushing men—quite free from the petty affectations of judgment in wine and French cookery, which make many ridiculous, who might have been only harmless. The only one properly ridiculous was Bones. He

had recently brought out a volume of poems, and written an absurd preface dated "Eve of St. Kilderkin." Frederick only asked him on this day, because he could not stand him, alone. You required to take him, well mixed with people of common sense !

The dinner was of the quiet class. The conversation skimmed politics, hovered about personal matters, and made flying dips into literature. The leading-article man unfortunately remarked that poetry was on its decline. Bones looked aggrieved. The leading-article man, poor fellow ! was unconscious of offence. He had never heard of "St. Ursula's Nightcap, and other Poems."

Frederick gave his usual toast—

"The people, the only source of legitimate power."

It was half-comedy with him.

"What do you say to that sentiment, Welwyn ?" he asked.

"I should look higher," said Welwyn.

"Talk of poetry," said the leading-article man ; "give me the man that can write a leader !"

“ Well, Pinion, I agree with you. I declare that for three who can write verses, novels, or essays, there is not one who can write a leader,” said Lepel. “ Mind you, I mean a good one !”

Pinion bowed.

“ I should think the ‘feeler’ must be the most difficult of the *genus*,” resumed Fred.

Pinion looked modest.

“ What is the ‘feeler?’ ” inquired the barrister.

“ Why,” said Lepel, “ when you want to know how public feeling is turning, and write a mysterious prolusion, that satisfies everybody, without communicating anything, or committing anybody !”

They all laughed, and looked at Pinion.

“ Talk of Delphi,” said Frederick, giving the port (the only wine he ‘hung-out,’ as the elegant phrase is) a vigorous push ; “ they never beat one of Pinion’s ‘ We’s !’ You know I’m a judge : I once owned a paper. And wasn’t I let in !”

“ I myself had a young one,” said Pinion, pathetically ; “ but——

‘Abstulit atra dies,’ &c.

it died, and made—no profit !”

“Have you seen *The Lays of Ancient Rome?*” asked somebody, across the table.

“I never read poetry,” said the statist.

“Well—but that has nothing to do with the *Lays*,” said Pinion, with a chuckle. “I said a good thing ——.”

“That was strange enough,” interrupted Frederick.

“A good thing,” resumed the unabashed Pinion, “the other day, about Macaulay.”

“Let us have it.”

“I said that he had sufficient imagination to adorn prose, but not to create poetry—like the mechanician in *Rasselas* whose wings supported him in the water, though they did not enable him to fly.”

“It seems to me, that old Johnson’s horrible style still sticks to our diction,” said Frederick.

“I see it everywhere and I hate it.”

“And I hate him,” said the statist. But to the honour of the company nobody coincided in the opinion. I remember an honoured friend of mine who used to say that he

invariably set a man, who talked about "Johnson's prejudices," down for a fool—and found it a good test.

A little after this period in the conversation, Lepel's servant came into the room.

"What's the matter?" inquired Frederick.

"Beg your pardon, sir—is one of the gentlemen's names Welwyn—a-staying at Hatchett's, if you please?"

Welwyn started. Who could want him? And who had traced him here?

"What is it?" he asked. "That's my name." Frederick dropped the nut-crackers and looked up. Bones started and spilled some wine over his "high church waistcoat" or "cassock waistcoat" (as they call them at Cambridge). Now-a-days, the University tailors seem to have the power of canonisation—formerly confined to the pope. It is a grand sight for a cynic to see one of them recommending to the spiritual enthusiast—a waistcoat that *looks like a hair-shirt!*

Welwyn hurried down stairs. In a moment he returned again. His face was serious,

though not agitated. He apologized, and said that he must go.

"It's a great pity. Let me see you soon," said Frederick.

Welwyn bowed and departed.—In half an hour he was rolling along, out of town, between two rows of tall elms that glided by him like the mourners in a funeral procession. On, on—in the direction of the Northern Star.

He sat in a post-chaise and was whirled over the Great Northern Road, through a rich level country, dotted with little dells, like dimples, and varied by undulations as gentle as the mark left on a pillow by the pressure of a fair girl's head. It was the close of Autumn. Earth seemed to have had her locks shorn to relieve the summer-fever. The fields were bare and rough—gristly with stubble, and seeming deserted for ever. Scarecrows that had done their office were rotting slowly at their posts.

It was a melancholy time, and it was a melancholy way. For, now that the current

of national blood runs in other channels, the Northern Road is bare and empty all day, as the dry bed of a river. Only outcasts and wanderers wearily drag along it, and leave red marks from their bare feet on its dusty paths. And, wretched above all is its autumnal wretchedness, when the hedges are bare and ragged, and the trees have little heaps of dead leaves lying at their feet.

Drearier and drearier it grew in the dusk, when every succeeding tree became dimmer, and the landscape on either side was heavy with blackness, except where a solitary distant light lay like a fallen star. Welwyn leaned back in his seat with his arms crossed, and could have fancied that there was a dark figure opposite, and sharing the journey. But his philosophy admitted no ghosts. Ghosts, ghosts—what ghosts can there be but projected from me! If he had seen all the Furies—he would have put his fingers on his pulse. In a world that is all shadows, what matter one more or less? Keep thy heart up, oh gentle idealist, whose philosophy lies as softly on thy being as moonlight on the sea!

Presently, the lights of a town rose over a curve in the road and flashed in the darkness, artillery-fashion. The chaise stopped at a turnpike, then whirled past quiet little houses with dabs of garden in front—and windows seeming sheets of light—(little houses that suggest love in a cottage, and a young wife reading one a new Poem by T——)—then stopped again. Welwyn got down—sent his trunk into the inn—and moved away on his business. He gained the centre of the town. A gigantic figure loomed near him. It was an abbey. He was in St. Alban's. Once more, our story lingers near St. Alban's pile and Bacon's ashes.

He passed down a lane near the abbey,—stopped at a door,—knocked thrice. It was opened by an old woman dressed in black, and holding a candle.

“Mr. Alfred—how you are grown! Come in, sir—the priests are with him.”

Welwyn's face darkened. He followed her on tip-toe, and with the soft, reverent step with which we approach a dearly-loved grave. (What a strange *life* there is about such a

spot!) In another minute he breathed heavily. The air he respired was that of his father's death-chamber. They had not met for years. They had been separated by temperament—by stern anger—by jealousy, and hate.

The father—a man of sixty—was lying on his back, breathing hard, and with his eyes fixed on the priests. They were by the bedside, and performing that ceremony in which the Church of Rome anoints with holy oil her dying children—to fight, like gladiators, the battle with death! One of them turned to the son, and made a motion to him to kneel. He paused, and obeyed. But he was not one who thought that he approached nearer the great Source of Being by bending his knees.

The ceremony was concluded. The priests withdrew. Welwyn was left alone in the room with his father. The old man took no notice of him; seemed quite unconscious of his presence. His manner was stern and strange—for there ran through his race that dark chain of eccentricity, at one end of which is genius, and at the other—insanity.

“Well, father,” said Welwyn, “I am come.”

The old man rose suddenly up in the bed. "Speak to me, my boy. Where is Ivy? Does she remember that she must expiate her mother's sin by her own sorrow? Listen to me—for I have not long to live, and already my heart beats slow and sullen, as if 'twere ashamed to go!"

Alfred was moved, and he sat down by the bedside.

"I know that my time is short. There has been a strange odour of violets all day. When I was young, I learnt that that was a sign of death. At least, I mean when it comes as it has here, and at times like this."

"Ivy is still at Malta," said Alfred, slowly, and avoiding reference to what his father had just said.

"Good, good!" and the old man's eyes brightened. "Convey my wishes to her, and tell her that as her mother lost heaven for the sake of me—"

"What!" cried his son, starting to his feet. The father, by a sudden impulse, pulled the bell-rope which hung by the bedside. The bell rang with a sharp, wailing noise through

the house. The elder of the two priests came into the room. Mr. Welwyn had fallen back on his pillow insensible—and insensible he passed away.

* * * * *

And Welwyn was wandering out in the open air of night, meditating on that event which turns the stars into mourners, and every wind of heaven into a dirge.

“When we are, Death is not; and when Death is, we are not.”*

A magnificent dilemma, with horns as bright and splendid as the horns of the moon!

* Tristram Shandy.

CHAPTER III.

Dressed for effect, yet no way proud of dress,
Bestowing alms though unmoved by distress,
Too proud to do no good—that would be mean—
But yet too vain to let that good be seen—
He never looked to heaven except for weather;
His heart and boots were both of patent leather;
An oligarch,—he strictly served the Crown,
Thinking it helped to keep the people down;
And though he left *Religion* in the lurch,
He paid his money to support the Church.

(From a volume of Unpublished Satires.)

FONTENROY the elder having just returned from his magisterial duties, was seated in his library at Heatherby. He was fatigued. It was the beginning of a severe winter. Poverty

and vagrancy were very common. A plentiful game season had produced very full calendars. In this country, crime fluctuates with the supply of partridges; and when we see it announced that the "birds are strong on the wing" at an early date in the season, we naturally expect full prisons and impoverished peasantry. Mr. Fontenoy and his colleague on the bench (Pierrepont of Pierrepont, &c.) had just been committing some hideous and unnatural villains for stealing holly.* The atrocious miscreants had been taking little pieces of that plant to sell to people desirous of adorning their houses with it at Christmas. Toleration has its limits. Such knaves must be sent to jail! Mr. Fontenoy had committed them with his most severe expression—a look that might have iced wine. Not that he was subject to fits of anger or excitement. He was usually in an equable state of cool temperature. He never knew those marvellous alternations which make of some men,—to-day a meteor flying through heaven,

* What has become of the "great-hearted gentlemen" of Browning's "Kentish Sir Byng's" school? Echo answers—but only from the grave!

—to-morrow an ærolite, cold and silent on the earth.

He busied himself just now among his papers. There was a deed of mortgage and the prospectus of a mining company before him, and lying beside them, a letter from his son, which he had indorsed "Singleton's folly," and which he kept with other documents of a very different character. He was a singularly unromantic man, one of those to whom tears suggest nothing but a pocket handkerchief. His favourite part of Scripture was the "Prodigal Son," which he conceived to have been expressly launched against the young gentlemen of his generation—and in killing the "Fatted Calf," his predominant reflection would have been on the price of veal. In fact, the contrast between himself and Singleton was as striking as that between the allegorical headings given to the chapters of the "Song of Solomon," and the gorgeous, glowing poetry of the Song itself! Greater, it could not well be.

He had just finished a letter when he heard a hasty step on the stairs; the door opened, and he welcomed Frederick Lepel. Notwith-

standing the difference of their political opinions (which in most cases was a matter of importance in Mr. Fontenoy's estimation) they were excellent friends ; he looked on Frederick as a sensible fellow, who wished to rise in the world, and who had doubtless very good private reasons for taking the course he did.

“ How do you do, Frederick ? ”

“ How are you, sir ? ” said Frederick, with much *empressement*. “ Do I interrupt you ? ”

“ Oh, no. I suppose you are beginning to be pretty full at Dunreddin, now ? ”

“ Yes,” said Frederick, shrugging his shoulders a little. “ What they call ‘ old English hospitality.’ My father is hinting at a wassail bowl ; as if one could not get drunk enough on mulled port ! ”

Mr. Fontenoy smiled grimly. “ By-the-by, we had some cases of holly stealing this morning. Curious thing it is, that people should deface shrubs ? and for what purpose ? A barbarous decoration ! ”

“ Yes,” said Frederick ; “ the only *use* of holly is to make birdlime.”

“Are there any fresh arrivals of guests?”

“Yes; and that was what I came over to talk about. We have got a Lieutenant Welwyn of the Navy, who knows Singleton; he found my father’s yacht in the Channel, drifting like a tub,—(when *I* want to go anywhere, I take a passage in a steamer,)—and towed them safe in to Plymouth.”

“Welwyn!” said Mr. Fontenoy, and he paused, and seemed meditating. “I remember a man of that name, long ago, abroad. Well, time passes!” Lepel looked at him with a half sneer, and turned and carelessly skimmed with his eye the book-cases. He was wondering what reminiscence had called so much human interest into that dry, hard face.

“What sort of man is this Welwyn?” Mr. Fontenoy asked, raising his head from his hand, on which it had been resting for some time.

“Quiet, grave, gentlemanlike, and rather unintelligible,” said Frederick, sententiously.

“Oh, a plain old Lieutenant.”

“Not at all; quite young and good-looking,

and talks much more like a pope than a sailor."

"Ah, I must have some conversation with him about Singleton."

Frederick then turned the conversation to business matters, for they were associated together in one or two projects, and after some time they set off for Dunreddin. They found a large company assembled in the drawing-room ; dinner waiting for them, old Mr. Lepel fidgetty, Mrs. Lepel anxious (she was always anxious when Frederick was late), Augusta pensive, and the company, generally, in various stages of decorous anxiety. Welwyn was dressed in mourning, and looked pale and thoughtful. The difference between him and Frederick, in appearance, was this,—one was the kind of man to sit for a Cardinal ; the other, to stand for a borough.

There was barely time for more than a mere formal introduction of Welwyn to Mr. Fontenoy, when dinner was announced, and the party "formed order of sailing," (as Sir J. Singleton, C.B., used to phrase it,) and "tacked

in succession" to the dining-room. During dinner, Welwyn glanced once or twice, at Mr. Fontenoy, who was at some distance from him. Mr. Fontenoy asked him to take wine, to encourage him! Fontenoy *père* liked a young man who looked shy. I still maintain that shyness usually accompanies mental superiority (by which I do not mean "brains," as people call it, or mere talent,)—though Thackeray classes it as a "species of vanity."* Say that the shyness of some is so; at all events, we must still class it with that good-natured vanity which is sensitive about the opinion of others. And how much better is that than the "air capable et composé," which, as Rochefoucauld says, usually becomes impertinence.

At dessert, it must be admitted the conversation was dull. There was a gentleman who talked of Prison Discipline, and whose conversation was a fine specimen of the severest Secondary Punishments. Frederick's talk, to be sure, was better, for, like a grind-stone, he

* In "Pendennis,"—where we find the good sense of a homily, with the easy charm of a novel.

not only ground, but sparkled. Fontenoy *père* uttered observations so gravely, that you were reminded of an oracle uttered by an oak of old. A Scotchman, who had come down from grouse-shooting, and who was a native of that remarkable part of Scotland called Galloway, spoke incessantly of "Galloway."

"Mr. Murdock, have you seen Ulswater?"

"Have ye ever seen Galloway?"

"Mr. Murdock, have you seen the new book on Palestine?"

"Palestine — Pawlestine! Eh, — it's no much bigger than Galloway!"

You always felt inclined to hurl a pineapple at the head of Murdock, if you sat opposite him; and were constantly reminded of that anecdote of Sir Philip Francis, in which we are told that he sprang from his chair once, seized a prosy man by the throat, in the middle of an observation, and exclaimed that "flesh and blood could bear it no longer!"

Welwyn was prodigiously relieved, when he found himself in the drawing-room. Near him, on an ottoman, was Ellen Pierrepont—

a little, fair, slim, girl, who tripped up to chat with an agreeable person, as prettily as a robin hops up to the window in winter-time for crumbs. She was attracted by Welwyn's reserve and quiet: perhaps agreeing with an old and forgotten writer, who says—

Not bould in speech, nor man of many words
Chuse thou a husband; leafy tree affords
The smallest store of fruit.*—————

Welwyn shut up the book he had been looking at, as she sat down beside him. During the few days he had been at Dunreddin, he had conversed with her several times. She used to talk to him about the sea, and then, by an easy transition—at least one that she found very easy—about Frederick Lepel.

“Now, Mr. Welwyn, tell me something about the Flying Dutchman.”

Augusta caught the words, and came over

* From “A Happy Husband,” by Patrick Hannay, Gent., M.A., 1618.—He was the author of Two Elegies on the Death of Queen Ann, wife of James I., and sometimes wrote with much point and command of versification. See Ellis's “Specimens,” &c., &c.

and joined them. She had a great love for the marvellous.

"It is odd," she said, "that the unromantic Dutch should have furnished the best supernatural story to the legends of the ocean."

"Yes," said Welwyn; "I remember, once, when I was coming round the Cape of Good Hope, in the 'Pelican.' It was very stormy weather——"

Augusta bent her eyes with an eager look; Ellen nodded her head with delight, at the prospect of a story, till her ringlets shook again. Presently, a little group formed round them.

"Very stormy weather!" resumed Welwyn. "Fancy a sky deadly black, with great, long clouds of glaring white scudding across it, and a moon rushing like a blood-red cannon-ball! We had been all day labouring in the sea, with very little sail set. Just at sunset, a ship passed close by us; I came to windward to look at her; she had a large black hull, with a white stripe; her masts were a bright brown; she was before the wind, flying at a grand pace——"

Ellen held her breath.

"She passed on. We watched her, breathlessly; her sails did not move; she went out of sight."

"Well?" asked Ellen.

"Well!" said the narrator, with a demure smile.

"Did you see her again?"

"No!"

"What was she, then?" asked Augusta.

"The 'Rampant,' Captain Huggles, going to Bombay, with a general cargo," said Welwyn, looking innocent.

"Oh! For shame!"

"Really, this is trifling with our young affections," said the lively and daring Miss Beaconsfield, who read George Sand.

Frederick Lepel, who had joined the group, laughed. "Very good, Welwyn. Generally, when sailors begin to spin a yarn, nothing short of the shears of Atropos can cut it in a decent time."

"And pray who is Atropos?" inquired Miss Beaconsfield.

"A *femme savante* of the upper circles,"

said Frederick, moving away. Ellen Pierrepont went to the piano. Augusta spoke to Welwyn, of Singleton; perhaps the father heard the name, for he crossed over to them.

“Pray—stay,” said Welwyn, in a sudden low voice, to Miss Lepel. She had been about to move away; she coloured a little, but remained seated.

Mr. Fontenoy came up, and entered into conversation with Welwyn about his son. His questions were of the genuine conventional class; they chilled Welwyn; Augusta had been chilled by such, long before. It is a sad fact that there are only two fates for genuine original beings born into the world of convention, now—rebellion or misery! Who ever met a very gifted person who was not either Fanatic, Quietist, or Quack? But it is only the first two that the world dislikes. *Allons!*

When Mr. Fontenoy had asked various questions, he paused: then he said, “I remember your name very well, Mr. Welwyn. Are you of the Welwyns of ——?” (naming a county).

“I never troubled myself much about our

origin," said Welwyn. "I was too careless, and too poor."

Mr. Fontenoy winced at the word "poor." For the life of him, he could not help shuddering at that word.

"I used to know a gentleman of your name," he went on, "long ago; I was abroad, then—"

"I don't think the name is uncommon," interrupted Welwyn. And the music growing loud at that moment, Mr. Fontenoy said, hastily, that he hoped to see more of Mr. Welwyn during his stay in this part of the country, and left them.

"I don't like that man," said Welwyn, suddenly.

Augusta was surprised, but she said simply, "Some people do not."

"Pardon me," he observed, recovering himself. "I talk in my sleep sometimes. My life is a melancholy dream."

The music ceased. Ellen Pierrepont came over to Augusta, with her winning way, and said, "Oh, pray sing us 'The Martyr.'"

“The Martyr?” said Frederick. “What is that?”

“You will be expected to cry,” said Miss Beaconsfield, in a comic whisper.

Augusta hesitated. One or two of the party pressed Ellen’s request.

“May I beg it as a favour,” said Welwyn.

Miss Lepel walked to the piano at once, and sat down; and Welwyn felt a sudden thrill of pleasure—so sweet, and so new!

Then Augusta sang the following strange irregular strain—quaint and sad, as a rude death’s-head and cross-bones on a country tomb. The attraction lay in the music to which it was set—a flowing, wild, melancholy melody, impossible to describe.

The Martyr.

It was the early morning
When first she met my view;
What time with heavy rain-drops
Sparkled the spear-like yew:
It was the fall of summer
When she used to pass by me;
What time the year was weaning
The fruit from the mother tree.

Ever, in early morning,
 Glided she forth alone ;
Cold and silent she seemed
 As a lily carved in stone :
Ever, in early morning,
 Forth the maiden goes,
With water, cold as her glances,
 To water a lonely rose.

Drooping and dying the rose seem'd—
 Forth the maiden goes—
Paler and paler her cheek grew,
 Redder and redder the rose !
It was the early morning—
 The rose had gained its prime—
A voice, like the voice of the maiden,
 Was heard in the village chime.

Still, from the early morning,
 Went on a heavy work ;
Deeply the green earth was wounded,
 In the shadow of the kirk.
Then there was no more morning—
 Oh ! then my grief was strong—
The rose decked the grave of the maiden,
 Who had nourished it so long.

There was a murmur as she ceased, and
Augusta coughed and lowered her head for a

moment, and her white handkerchief gleamed as it crossed her long black hair. Mr. Fontenoy had, strange to say, been listening with attention, and seemed to take more interest in it than he did in music generally. (Though, to be sure, he had subscribed for a new organ for the Rev. Mr. Rutter's church lately!)

"Do you know where we got that music, Mr. Fontenoy?" asked Ellen Pierrepont, timidly.

"No."

"On that day when we were all over at Heatherby, and you gave us leave to turn over those old portfolios of music. It was tied up in a romantic way, and there was a lock of hair inside."

Mr. Fontenoy turned pale. At that moment he met Welwyn's eye, and apparently something in its expression discomposed him, for he turned away, changed the conversation abruptly, with a little rusty laugh, and soon afterwards ordered his carriage, and went home. The Pierreponts went also soon afterwards; and it became evident that it was

time for everybody to retire, for Murdock had fallen sound asleep on a sofa, and was snoring like an apoplectic Stentor.

Welwyn gained his room, and sinking into a chair began to muse. "No, it is madness—folly grown insane! It is impertinence. If she loves me—why, then, that only makes it worse! I hope she does not—I hope to God she does not. Pshaw! Shall I, who am a sharer in the Great Soul—

" ' . . . owner of the sphere
Of the seven stars, and the solar year.' "

become the slave of an idea—a formalist—a fanatic? I have not broken every idol only to make room for one."

Meanwhile, Frederick Lepel in his rooms read a line written on half a sheet of scented note paper. It was this—

"DEAR FRITZ,—I think—yes.

"E."

Frederick lighted his meerschaum with it, stirred the fire, took from it a little copper pan, in which some claret was gently simmering, and

left the room, treading lightly along the gallery.

Welwyn heard a slight tapping at his door, —started and coloured,—then smiled at his folly, and opened it. He saw Frederick in a rich dressing gown, and with a black velvet cap on.

“I thought you would not have gone to bed. Just step over to my rooms, and have a chat. I can’t sleep yet.”

Welwyn readily assented. They sat down in Frederick’s sitting-room. Fred wound up his alarum, which was to summon him to his reading early, and composing himself in a huge arm chair, seemed in the exact mood for gossip. But, in truth, the active brain under his pale, well-developed forehead was busily at work.

They chatted away pleasantly enough—talked of the various people in the house, and the neighbouring country. Fred was gay and amusing.

Presently he leaned forward to knock the ashes out of his pipe, and said, “I expect another visitor soon—one of the ‘sordid and

rapacious oligarchy,' as some of my radical friends call them ; but in reality a pleasant, gentlemanly fellow — (here Fred laughed agreeably) — with everything about him that said radicals think creditable in themselves, and blood that every man of good descent must sympathise with into the bargain — Lord Belden. (Here Fred rose, and touched Welwyn's shoulder.) I know you would soon guess the state of things, so I tell you beforehand. He is what people call 'in love' with Augusta — an old engagement. — Hang it, I thought I had put too much nutmeg in! What a bore!"

CHAPTER IV.

Leave all for love;—
Yet, hear me, yet,
One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavour,
Keep thee, to-day,
To-morrow, for ever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

EMERSON.

My faculties gather to her beauty, like the genii to the glister of the lamp.

“Shirley,” by Currer Bell, Vol. iii. 149–50.

WELWYN descended very late to breakfast next morning. He had scarcely sat down when Miss Lepel entered the room. Mr. Murdock was finishing a grouse. “Eh, Muster

Welwyn, you're late this morning! And ye, too, Miss Lepel!" (Murdock had a notion that his *forte* was comedy.)

"I slept ill, and was restless," said Welwyn.

Augusta had slept ill, and had been restless. Welwyn saw as much—if not from her delicate pallor, and the touching languor of her eyes, for which the long black lashes seemed too heavy—then, certainly, from the blush which passed across her features as he spoke, like the reflection of a kingfisher's breast in a running stream.

"I heard from Gawloway this morning," said Murdock, chipping an egg, as you could fancy an ibis chipping a crocodile's. "Mr. Welwyn, have ye been in the West Indies?"

"For a short time."

"Ye'll know something of guano then!"

Murdock carried him off to the library, to ask him the important question at greater leisure. Even this monstrous bore was a relief to Welwyn in his present frame of mind. Mr. Murdock pelted him with guano for an hour, then strolled off to take a walk, and examine any vagrants that he might meet on the

roads as to the causes of their being out of employment; having accomplished which, he used to give the victim a penny, and advise him to read Adam Smith. He then sauntered on through the lanes, calculating the pecuniary value of any *exuviae* lying on the road; and so passed the day in rational and honest pursuits, and thanked heaven that he was not a dreamer, but a practical man.

When Murdock had gone out, Welwyn deliberated what he should do. There was the library, but he had not courage to read. The weather was too cold for sauntering to anybody but the hardy Murdock. In this hesitation he was wandering about the library, reading the names of books which he was too languid to take down, when Mr. Lepel came in. He was laudably anxious to see that his guest was amused, and Welwyn was equally anxious to appear perfectly happy.

Mr. Lepel began hunting about for an attractive volume for him as eagerly as if he had been a bookseller going to dispose of it. His own literary tastes—as far as he had literary tastes—were of a good old traditionary cha-

racter. He liked Shakspeare, but did not care to trouble himself with Coleridge and Hazlitt's criticisms on him—much less with all those wonderful speculations with which the world has been flooded of late, wherein Caliban is proved to be a Brummell, and Iago an injured individual—with much of the same class. He honoured Milton, yet somehow did not often read anything but *Comus*. Among moderns, Burke was a favourite, Sir Walter Scott a darling. He had only ventured on one of Sir Edward's novels, and he timidly objected to one or two of Tennyson's poems, as some old people do.

"Let me see—what have we here?"—he said, taking out a volume. "Jones on Constitutional Law. Hem! An elaborate treatise!"

Welwyn smiled as he saw that the leaves were uncut. Jones was replaced.

"As a naval man, perhaps you would like a naval novel." He took down "*Tom Cringle's Log*"—the best fiction of that species that was ever written. Welwyn had read it.

"Really," said Welwyn, laughing, "you are

giving yourself too much trouble, and encouraging me in lazy habits."

"I tell you what," said Mr. Lepel, "I wish you would go and visit Mr. Fontenoy at Heatherby. Some of the young ladies have been intending to go for some time."

"I don't like the man, but I must see him some time. I need not stay long, and there will be others with me," *thought* Welwyn, in an instant. So he said that he was ready to go. He was going to say *happy*, though he invariably endeavoured to check all tendencies to conventional talk as well as he could. But, as times go, one might as well speak Sanscrit, as speak honestly, for general purposes.

Mr. Lepel went out. Welwyn remained alone in the library. He took up some paper, and fell to sketching heads with a pen. He drew well—a common accomplishment in the service.

Presently Augusta and Ellen Pierrepont came in, looking for their negligent cavalier. Welwyn jumped up, and threw down the pen.

"I ought to have been ready, but pray excuse me for a moment." He left the room

to make some slight change in his dress. When he returned, they went out. They had agreed to walk, as the distance was trifling. The air was milder, and the sun made the snow which rested in light flakes on the tips of the trees and shrubs, sparkle there like blossoms. They all three walked easily along, and without taking arms. That custom is a bore. It prevents you seeing the face of the person you are walking with, unless you markedly turn your head to meet their eyes—which is sometimes awkward. I frankly confess, that I hate to see a troupe of couples, chained together like galley-slaves, or—to use a more pleasing illustration—tied together in *abouquet*.

“I love winter scenery,” said Welwyn, “I like what somebody calls,

‘The frolic architecture of the snow.’”*

Here they gained the summit of a rather steep lane.

“That is Heatherby,” said Miss Lepel, pointing to Mr. Fontenoy’s seat. Soon after-

* The quotation is an anachronism, I am afraid, in Welwyn’s mouth. But I would risk a worse fault to introduce a line of Emerson’s!

wards they stepped into the park. There were many acres of grand, smooth sward, dotted here and there with noble trees. On one side of the house rose a slight hill covered with a thick plantation. The estate was very well wooded—though, just at this time, execution had been done to a considerable extent, and trees, peeled white, and with the bark piled in square black loads beside them (like bathers with their clothes), were lying stretched in pale death. These were phenomena on which our party did not speculate.

“It is a beautiful place,” said Welwyn, pausing. He thought of Singleton, and mentally congratulated him on the heritage ; but as for envy, it never entered his mind.

As they approached the house, its beauty grew more grand, more definite and imposing. It was intellectually as well as architecturally Elizabethan. Its deep red hue shone in the sun like petrified fruit. There was a certain pride even in the attitude of the “three roebuck’s heads *couped*,” which figured on the escutcheon in front. They seemed ready to show fight—like their master—and appeared

to exclaim, "Look at us, we are preserved!" The building was eloquent and conscious, and said "Behold oh visitor! I am an aristocrat. If my possessors are not titularly noble, 'tis that they were too proud to seek a superfluous honour!"

Mr. Fontenoy was out, but was going to return soon. So they walked in to wait for him, and strove to amuse themselves in the interval. Not that that was easy in Mr. Fontenoy's mansion, wherein a solemn grandeur as of a cathedral reigned ever—where a canary in a cage was afraid to sing—where the shy and the tremulous sipped the wine at lunch with an awful reverence. Indeed, every thing there became the master, who—as Camille Desmoulins wittily said of St. Just—carried his head as if it were the Host!

"That vase came from Pompeii," said Augusta, pointing to one.

"It has only changed its tomb," said Ellen Pierrepont, who occasionally shot a silver arrow at Mr. Fontenoy, of whom she stood in some dread.

"I have often wondered," said Augusta,

lowering her voice, "what kind of lady Mrs. Fontenoy was ; I believe she died young."

A slight cold calm fell upon the three. Welwyn rose from his chair, and began pacing the large drawing-room in which they were sitting—crossing the streams of light and shadow that poured from the lofty window.

"Singleton is not at all like his father in the face," he said, musingly.

"I dare say he resembles *her*," said Miss Lepel. "I can fancy a girl like Singleton."

Welwyn halted, and looked out of the window. The light fell on his profile.

"I see a slight resemblance to Singleton in Mr. Welwyn," said Miss Pierrepont. Welwyn moved rather abruptly, and smiled.

"Yes, I can fancy a girl like Singleton," said Augusta again, musingly.

Welwyn again stopped, and looked at them.

"Can you fancy a girl with a face something between an Italian summer and a northern sky, with hair in ebony blossoms, and eyes like violets in love?"

"Yes," said both the girls, smiling a little ;
"and what then?"

“Can you fancy her shuddering at the prospect of a cloister?”

“Oh, yes!” cried the Pierrepont, making her ringlets dance.

“And having escaped that,—finding the worse cloister of a cold heart for shelter? Finally, love having changed into sorrow, and religion darkened into superstition, can you fancy, then, her wearing away, and, in a word, dying a martyr to an aspiration?”

“Like the martyr in the song we found here,” said Miss Pierrepont.

“Yes,” said Welwyn, slowly—“yes—very like the martyr in the song. True!”

His manner was so strange, that they turned rather pale, and looked at each other. But the shade passed away from his high pale brow, and he smiled again, and began more lightly.

“Well, this was a fancy of mine.—How strange that Mr. Fontenoy does not come!”

“Let us look at the pictures—let us look at the ancient Fontenoy,” said Miss Pierrepont.

It was agreed. They gained the gallery; there were the gentlemen. They wandered about criticising them; sometimes Augusta

praised one—so that Welwyn wondered it did not suddenly take life, and walk down with delight. One section of the Mahometans hold the odd belief that all artists will, at the Judgment-day, be called on to furnish souls for their figures. Happy creed! Oh, shade of Phidias, the figures in the works of some of our English gentlemen want souls most terribly!—But this is a mere passing shot, to put the “light” reader into good humour!

“Mr. Fontenoy is like that gentleman,” said Welwyn, indicating the great-grandfather.

“Except, unhappily, in one thing—he speaks!” said Miss Pierrepont.

As they left the gallery, Augusta lingering behind day-dreamily, the old housekeeper, —ladylike, stately Mrs. Campbell, of whom we had a peep before,—came up to her, with a solemn whisper:

“Dear me, Miss Lepel, what is that gentleman’s name?”

“Mr. Welwyn, a naval officer,” said Augusta, colouring.

“Well, Miss Lepel,” said the housekeeper, solemnly, “he reminds me in his face—he’s

really very like—it's the oddest thing possible—of Mr. Fontenoy's lady. But I dare not speak of it."

Mrs. Campbell moved away, and Augusta followed Welwyn and Ellen. They were in the drawing-room together; and, as they did not care much for each other, talking in a lively and intimate strain. Ellen asked him if he believed in love at first sight, to which he answered "Yes; and in no other!" And afterwards Ellen repeated the phrase to Augusta, who thought of making a note of it, but found it unnecessary—she remembered it so well!

At last Mr. Fontenoy arrived. He had been very busy; he had been over to Huskdale. He ordered lunch; he received Welwyn very hospitably. The four sat down; the repast consisted of what my Lady Wortley Montague loved—chickens and champagne.

"I am sorry you had to wait," said Mr. Fontenoy, gravely, for the third time.

"Oh!" said Miss Pierrepont, in her usual lively style, "we amused ourselves very well: Mr. Welwyn has a dramatic talent."

Mr. Fontenoy bowed his acquiescence, pleasantly.

“And,” continued Ellen, gaily, and never noticing that Welwyn was looking dark, and actually somewhat alarmed—“he interested us by drawing a picture of a girl escaping a cloister—marrying a lover—and, finally—ah! a melancholy fancy—pining away!”

Welwyn blushed scarlet; Augusta seemed terrified; Mr. Fontenoy paused, apparently shocked, with his glass in his hand—then raised it. His lips were pale, and rigidly quivering as they were touched by the wine. It is a terrible sight to see a cold, worldly man stung or shocked: the more firmly the tree is rooted in *earth*, the more startling is the crash when the lightning from heaven *does* come!

Ellen looked up in surprise at the sensation her careless words had made.

Mr. Fontenoy recovered himself, and said some common-place thing, but his glance rested for an instant on Welwyn, with a dark and sinister expression,—then he poured out some more wine, and so the lunch passed off—

everybody disturbed—everybody trying to be easy—and everybody conscious of the failure.

Mr. Fontenoy rose.

“Mr. Welwyn,” he said, “let me show you my library. These young ladies have been often there,—they will excuse us.”

Welwyn bowed, and strode after the speaker with a step as proud as his own. As they entered the room, Mr. Fontenoy shut the door, and locked it,—they were left alone with the solemn, quiet books, and the sublime and sallow face of the churchman by Velasquez, who lorded it over the chamber.

“Mr. Welwyn,” said Mr. Fontenoy, “I perceive that you *are* of the Welwyns of ——”

“If you know them, you know how, alone, they may be addressed!” said Welwyn, with lofty quiet.

“I know my duties as a gentleman,” said Mr. Fontenoy, with cold pride. “Well, sir, have you come here, to betray my early follies to—everybody—to the world?” He stammered, and was moved. “I know your father hates me;—I know all,—everything, sir,—I defy him!—”

“He is dead,” said Welwyn, tranquilly;

“these words are idle, as the wind that sweeps his grave. But come, Mr. Fontenoy,” he continued, availing himself of his companion’s mute surprise to seize his attention; “come, listen to reason, listen to something better,—feeling. Man should not, like the tree, get hollow at the heart, as he gets hoary at the head!—As to what you have just said, I am no babbler,—what that young girl spoke of, was only told as an idle fancy, without weight or name. I will suppress no truth, but I will indulge no gossip. Yet, after all, Mr. Fontenoy, why a mystery? *I*, sir,” said Welwyn, proudly, “am not ashamed of the blood with which you mingled your own—which I share with your son. *He*, I doubt not,—”

“Enough, sir,” said Mr. Fontenoy, now recovering himself quite, and subsiding into his old shell; “I thank you. Our opinions differ; but, Mr. Welwyn, we will have silence and friendship. How stiff the lock of the door is!”

They went out, and Mr. Fontenoy’s soul ran back again—like a startled rabbit into its burrow.

The girls were in the drawing-room; Mr.

Fontenoy smiled as he joined them, and said to Welwyn:—"A good library, is it not?" But Welwyn never stooped to conventional trickery, so he merely made a bow, and did not disguise, in his manner, that the interview had been of a serious character.

It happened that Mr. Fontenoy was that day engaged to dine with the Lepels. It was drawing near the time for departure, and it was agreed that the four should go together,—then it was agreed they should walk,—then Miss Pierrepont manœuvred to walk with Welwyn, (not that she liked him—'twas part of an under-current of plot—yet she did not dislike him either,) but that was defeated,—then she dropped behind, that Welwyn and Augusta might walk first, in sight of her,—strange to say, that, too, was not accomplished,—finally the two couples set off.

Welwyn, loq. I hope, Miss Lepel, you were not much agitated by the awkward scene at lunch?

Augusta. I was, somewhat.

Welwyn (hesitating). It was embarrassing. Do you understand it, Miss Lepel?

Augusta. I could see that the words awoke a painful reminiscence ; indeed, I fancy (*hesitates*) that they embodied a part of Mr. Fontenoy's own history.

Welwyn. It is like your —— (*stops short,*) I should say—you are quite right,—such is the case ; I happen to know the story.—In fact—but I may be frank with you ?

Augusta (*turning her eyes fearlessly upon him*). I hope so, indeed, Mr. Welwyn ; we ought all to be frank !

Welwyn. Thank you ; plainly then, he did marry a lady in the way described, and whose fate (*his voice lowers,*) was, as described. *My father married her elder sister,*—but, perhaps, it should not be told to everybody.

Augusta (*much surprised*). I will keep it secret.

They walked on together. Their two friends were considerably in advance,—and Welwyn mused and wavered,—should he try and divine whether the girl by his side was fancy-free or not, and, having found out, take a decided course one way or another ? On one side, was acceptance,—on the other, going back

to the navy, might not the fate of Icarus befall him, and he, in soaring too boldly towards Heaven, fall into *the Sea*! The whole speculation was intoxicating. She knew his thoughts, and she honoured his fears,—and silent, seemingly formal as they were, they marched on together—like Æneas and his friend—wrapped in a haze, woven by the Queen of Love!

When they reached Dunreddin, they found Frederick in great good spirits—Lord Belden having arrived, and with him the news of the dangerous illness of one of the sitting members for Huskdale. Frederick had been playing up to that seat for years. He was young, clever, of good family, good expectations, and well backed. Now was the time! By using Augusta to attract my Lord Belden—by playing Welwyn against him—by courting Mr. Fontenoy—and availing himself of Ellen Pierrepont as a diplomatist generally, wonders might be accomplished!

Indeed, Frederick was now about to keep all these human objects in play around him, like balls spun by a juggler, for praise and

profit of his own. Meanwhile, he amused everybody, in everybody's favourite way. And thus, this Alcibiades of the Manchester School, cut off his dog's tail, to tickle and beguile the good Athenians of the county of Rockshire.

CHAPTER V.

I was a child, and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love, that was more than love,
I and my Annabel Lee.

EDGAR A. POE.

IVY TO HER BROTHER ALFRED WELWYN.

“ Malta.

“ It has happened as you feared, my brother.
We have met ! I know not how he found me.
I was strolling in the garden in the hour
before sunset, just when the breeze fresh from
the sea makes the air cool, when he passed in
at the gate. I like his manner. He moves
with the look of one who has a right to be in

the world. I scarcely know what made me blush and start as he entered. And I blushed more when I reflected that he perceived it. Yet, why? It cannot be that I love him. I love the Holy Mother—I love my holy patron saint. And it never makes me blush to see *their* image, or to kneel at *their* shrine! This is wrong, this confusion. I have imposed on myself penance and vigil. I will expiate the pleasure which his society gives me. Well, I do so! Yet the penance does not wound, as penance did before; and the vigil! ah, it is superfluous! The thought of him keeps me awake and restless, as the ruffled rose-leaf disturbed the Sybarite's sleep.

“ You will not blame me, Alfred, that I write freely to you. I know not whether these feelings are wrong; but if so, whence do they come? Can the great Power, which we all dread, stoop to torture a being like me? Sometimes a terrible idea haunts me: is it that I am given over to the Evil One? Does he tempt me thus? Or, can an evil being come in such a sweet shape? It is a heavy mystery! Can it indeed be wrong to feel for

a gentle-hearted friend something of the affection which we are all taught to feel for God,—which our nature makes us feel for flower and star?

“It seems to me, my brother, that I have discovered my sin! I am too happy! I have no right to love so intensely that blue heaven which I have done nothing to earn. I have no right, when I loll under the orange-tree, and watch the first swarm of fire-flies gathering in the myrtle-bush, to doubt that labour and watching here are necessary to avoid eternal pain. I am the vilest of the heretics! When *he* whispers to me, my heart beats, as it never beats at the music of the choir, or the tones of the priest. O, my brother, write to me; dispel my doubts as to right and wrong; blame me, if you please, but send me a law.

“You know my education. You know how rigidly I have obeyed all. From my youth in the green valleys where our father now rests, I was taught by the ministers of our creed that expiation was due by *me* for the faults of our mother's race. My mother—her sister—

offended heaven, and broke laws. What was the result? You know our father's treatment of the heart of her who abandoned all she had been vowed to for him! You know her sister's fortune—how they repented bitterly—how they died young. Well, I early resolved to atone for their failing, and to shun their fate. And, behold! the veil that I have been looking forward to as a bridal garment now looms on me a pall!

"I feel weary and irresolute. The grand, gorgeous roof of the church now seems crushing me with its weight. The incense is sickly and heavy. How different all from the fresh green of the garden and the pure perfume of the flowers! The father to whom I confess perceives the change that has come over my spirit. He presses me—he grieves me. I am shocked; for it seems a profanation. I am miserable; for I fear that my thoughts are sinful. When I sprinkle myself with water, the cross seems burning on my brow!

"I am sure I have struggled to do right. I have spent my youth in solitude, or among the devout. I have avoided the follies of girlhood.

On the bare walls of my chamber no mirror has hung. When I looked accidentally into a fountain, and, blushing, began to adorn my hair, I turned away suddenly, and reflected I was doing wrong.

“I have poured out all my strange wandering thoughts before you, Alfred. Tell me what I am to do. I swear that I adhere to the old faith ; I practise all its rites. Surely that I am happy when I am with my cousin, is not a sin ! Is my heart a sin ? I will pray to the Holy Mother—Rose of Sharon—and Ark of the Covenant—and she will send me grace ! I will cast the false idol from my heart ——

* * * I break off suddenly, Alfred—for he is here !”

Slowly rose Welwyn from his seat, as he finished this letter. It fell from his hand, and fluttered to the floor.

It was the morning after the visit at Mr. Fontenoy's ; he was alone in the library, where he had retired to read it. He recovered himself—picked it up again—and walked to the window, that the sight of the landscape might

compose his mind. Then he set himself to a calm reflection on the state of circumstances. He was embarrassed at every turn of his thoughts; difficulty here—difficulty there—confusion and sorrow over all! He felt a hand on his shoulder, and started; it was Frederick Lepel.

CHAPTER VI.

My son, my lord—a youth of parts,
Who longs to be a small place-holder !

MOORE. “The Fudge Family in Paris.”

“You look gloomy, Welwyn !” said Frederick. “One would fancy you were in love !”

“If I were ?” said Welwyn, quietly, “What then ?”

Frederick shrugged his shoulders, and smiled. “Well—I don’t know. I suppose you would go down on your knees, and pour out—your expectations !”

Welwyn gave a melancholy laugh.

“I am owner of the sphere,
Of the seven stars and the solar year.”

"A brilliant property, but the rents are cursedly badly paid," said the worldling. "But let us come out, and amuse ourselves. For myself, I am just in the humour for killing mandarins."

"Killing mandarins!"

"Yes. Havn't you read Balzac the Inimitable? He starts the question whether if one could kill a mandarin in China, and gain a large sum of francs, by moving the little finger—one would do it. Mind you, without any annoyance, or anything of that sort—only the certainty that you had done it. I frankly confess that—to use an Americanism—I am a whale at mandarins!"

"It's a very philosophical idea, and aptly hits our epoch," said Welwyn. "Would you really kill the mandarin?"

"Why—would not you?" asked Frederick with surprise.

"I don't know. I think not."

"We all do it," said Frederick, "and for much less than Balzac's amount. Parliament does it. Everybody does it."

They went out. A phaeton was waiting at

the door ; they drove off in it, to Huskdale. As they were driving along, Frederick talked of his prospects. There was every chance of a vacancy in the borough soon, and he was preparing an address.

“I made my *début* in that building as a politician,” he said, jerking the whip in the direction of the hall, where that great meeting was held which my hero attended. Its doors were now covered with placards, announcing a series of lectures. Frederick pulled up, to take a glance at them : it looked liberal. And Frederick subscribed to the Huskdale Ethnogymnasium—the Mechanics’ Institute—and all the other institutions for the benefit of the people which Huskdale afforded. The syllabus, as it was called, which they were now inspecting, announced that Mr. Thomas Snoggles would deliver the following lectures—

Monday—On Ancient Etruria.

Tuesday—The Habits of Bees.

Wednesday—The Phœnician language.

Thursday—The Law of Nations.

Friday—Early Spanish Literature.

Saturday—The Metaphysics of Logic.

While Sunday evening had, with wonderful appropriateness, been selected as the time for a discourse on miracles, not as they appeared to St. Paul, but as they appeared to Mr. Snoggles !

“Snoggles must be a man of erudition,” said Welwyn, drily.

Frederick drove on rapidly, and began to laugh.

“My dear sir, reform is like the Thames : it is a great river, but partly fed by sewers.”

“Whig, above Richmond, eh ?”

“Humph,” said Frederick ; “you flatter the Whigs.”

On rattled the greys. The two young men saw the portly figure of the Rev. Mr. Rutter coming down on one side of the pavement ; his legs, encased in gaiters of sombre black, were so small in proportion to his body, that he always looked like one of the staves held by a mute. This Frederick had just observed to Welwyn, when the phaeton turned a corner, and entered Mammon Street. They instantly perceived the figure of a little active man waiting at the corner. Frederick pulled up :

they got down ; left the phaeton in charge of the servant who had been sitting behind, and joined the stranger.

“ How are you, Bibb ?” said Frederick.

“ Good morning.”

Bibb took snuff, and began to talk, keeping his fingers inside the lid. He was a strange little man, dressed in black ; he had square-shaped tight features, with blue eyes, that never rested for a moment ; and had a curious trick of constantly looking, first on one side, and then on the other, as if he expected to see a friend or a bailiff. Frederick used to call him “ the Man with the Brazen Mask.” There was a mystery about him. One acquaintance thought him a person of family ; the other, a returned convict. It was impossible to decide who he was. If you knew for certain that he was living in St. Giles’s in the morning, you would probably see him in the middle of the day talking to a county member.

“ Well, Mr. Bibb, how do matters look ?”

“ Very well. I have been all the morning spreading a rumour——”

Welwyn looked surprised. Frederick saw it ; so he checked the speaker, carelessly.

“Diffusing intelligence, eh?”

“Yes, I’m a man of business. You see, Mr. Lepel, that at a crisis like this, when the minds of the people have once been attracted to a public matter, the attention must be kept awake by a perpetual series of new touches.”

Frederick nodded.

“I remember,” said Bibb, taking snuff, “that when Jolby stood for —— he and two other fellows kept me for an hour, trying to persuade me to go down and oppose Peel at Tamworth, once——”

Welwyn opened his eyes : he now guessed that Mr. Bibb was an electioneering agent ; so he was, *pro tem*.

“For two mortal hours at the Reform Club, sir, they kept bullying me to go down. Perhaps I was wrong not to go : after all, there was nothing to do, but answer Peel !”

Frederick coughed slightly. Mr. Bibb continued.

“As your friend here has very reasonably observed——”

"I beg pardon," said Welwyn, with mild surprise. "But I am not aware that I observed anything."

"Oh, I beg pardon," said Bibb, rather taken aback; "I thought you did"—(the truth is, from all appearances Mr. Bibb had that morning been "lunching with an eminent distiller," which was his phrase for refreshing himself at the Green Man.) "But to resume. When Jolby stood for ——, I got him in—cost him only 850*l.* *I was known in the county,*" added Bibb, impressively.

And here he entered into a long harangue, in oratorical phraseology, and concluded by pulling out a dirty "Parliamentary Companion." He ran through some thirty or forty names, smudging the page with his thumb. "I know *him*—know *him*—know *him*." And then he pulled out a letter beginning "My dear Bibb" from a very well-known member, and ended by a rapid glance at the present state of the borough of Huskdale. He talked of Church, and Reform, and Education, as people do of the articles in a market; and discussed principles as men talk over the

odds. Finally, he had an appointment on business, and he hurried away.

Lepel and Welwyn moved on. Frederick repented that he had brought Welwyn with him.

"A queer fellow, Mr. Bibb—is he not?" he asked.

"Yes," said Welwyn, "an odd-looking fellow, too."

"Indifferent to externals—a philosopher, sir," said Frederick, compassionately.

"Quite natural that the lowest of all trades should be carried on in the lowest of all manners," said Welwyn, quoting Macaulay.

Frederick looked at him with some surprise; but there was no expression of sarcasm in his face. Welwyn hated and despised nothing. He looked from a calm height at all evil, or if he had to come near it, simply moved out of its way. He was optimist, without fanaticism, quietist without indifference.

They walked on, each engaged in his own reflections. Suddenly Frederick pulled Welwyn by the arm. They halted abruptly. They were just opposite the office of one of

the county papers. It was Saturday. The lamps were glimmering through the window from the inside ; and outside, on a large sheet of paper in huge letters, still wet as streams of rain, were these words :

“ BY EXPRESS,”

“ DEATH OF MR. PROSSER, M.P.”

“ Come in,” said Frederick, quickly ; they entered together. “ Give me a copy of the paper.” His fingers trembled as he pulled out his purse to pay for it, so that he could scarcely undo the knot. As they went out again, the wind blew the damp sheet all over him. “ Tush, pshaw !” He doubled it up, violently, and read the passage he wanted. Welwyn stood by, and gazed calmly on his heightened colour and elated eye.

“ Come on, Welwyn, home.”

They walked quickly to the phaeton which was waiting at the “ George.” The greys sprang forward, and off they rolled to Dunreddin. “ Wrap yourself, my boy,” said Frederick, pulling the apron over Welwyn, “ it’s devilish cold !” His heart was overflowing

with good nature from the sudden good news. The borough was vacant at last. But Welwyn in his brooding, thoughtful way, kept wondering at the death—which Frederick looked on as such a mere stroke of fortune—wondering what sort of man Prosser had been—and dreamily speculating where and how his cold figure was lying, at that instant. Some men get morbid from the habit of eternal speculation. I do not envy the insight that glances down to the bottom of a churchyard, and sees rottenness and worms, where I see graceful hillocks and fresh grass !

“ Well, what news ? ” asked Lord Belden, rising from the sofa in the drawing-room, and stroking his moustache as they entered. He was a short compact man, with black whiskers and pale forehead, with very small hands and feet, neat, good-natured, and gentlemanly, as unlike an Oligarch (which seems, somehow, to be the ogre of political nursery tales, now-a-days) as possible !

“ Prosser est mort,” said Frederick. “ My address will be out on Monday. Beer must flow ; the British lion is roused, and I will put my head in his mouth.”

There was a general laugh. Dinner was announced. It was a very lively meal that day.

"What do you say to the repeal of the corn laws?" asked Lord Belden.

"Things are not ripe for that yet," said Frederick.

"Things not being *ripe*, means, with the radicals, that there is nothing for them to pluck," said his lordship.

"You are severe."

"What, you don't call yourself a radical, do you?"

"Not in the offensive sense of the word," said Frederick, cautiously. "I am an enlightened movement man. And as I only want, that what is best for all parties to be removed, should be removed, I may be said to be a conservative."

Welwyn happened to be looking towards Augusta at that moment. She smiled. The graceful Murdock bawled out "A'm afraid that's Jesuitical," to Frederick. Murdock liked downright men; and as he was sternly opposed to free trade, he was at this time a supporter of Sir Robert.

Somebody having mentioned Mr. Fontenoy shortly after this, Mr. Lepel said that he had been having bad news of Singleton, from Malta.

"I wonder what he means by bad news of Singleton," said Augusta. "I hear something like that of him every other mail."

"I believe he has been forming a foolish attachment, my dear," said her father.

Augusta was silenced. Frederick glanced at Belden. Then he said across the table to Welwyn,

"What do you say to that, Welwyn? You know him."

"I?" said Welwyn, "I think it extremely probable." Looking up, he saw that Augusta's eyes were turned away, but he saw also—or fancied—that she was colouring slightly.

"The question arises, what is a foolish attachment?" said a young Beaconsfield, of a legal turn. Nobody seemed to know.

"Do you know, Miss Pierrepont?" said that forward youth, to Ellen.

"Yes; it is an attachment to a person who does not care for you," said Ellen, half in jest

and half in earnest, and with her April smile,—"April, with her white hands wet with flowers," to use Leigh Hunt's lovely line.

"Very good, my dear Miss Pierrepont," said Mr. Lepel, paternally. Frederick adjusted his collar; Lord Belden looked sentimental, and wiped his moustache with his fragrant cambric.

When the ladies rose to depart, Frederick opened the door. It chanced, that an observation had created some lively dialogue at his father's end of the table. The hum having passed, Frederick was missed.

"Where is Frederick?" asked Mr. Lepel.

Lord Belden raised the gold eye-glass which usually reposed on his breast. "Don't see him."

"Hem! Fred has a chance *now*, has he not?" asked the father, looking eagerly and elatedly at the gentlemen present.

"Oh, certainly,—no doubt,—youth of talents,"—went round the table in a murmur of approbation. The old man passed his fingers through his sunny white hair.

“He shall have all the support of our family,” said Lord Belden.

And indeed that was cheering. His father, the Earl of Clangour, was one of the magnates of the county; he had a castle as large as a village, with a conservatory worthy of Montezuma, an aviary like an American forest,—everything, in short, that could minister to luxury, or gratify pride. The Earl himself, who had been shattered by a terrible stroke of paralysis, never quitted his own room. Lord Belden was the eldest and only son; the lord of everything except his own will, he was—for he was one of the most indecisive of mankind.

Where was Frederick? When the ladies went to the drawing-room, he stole up to his own apartments; he arranged the papers on the spacious table, stirred the fire, and lighted a large lamp; then he began pacing the room, and every now and then paused to listen at the half-opened door. A pause,—then a step was heard, light as the rustle of a leaf; another,—and Ellen Pierrepont entered!

“Hush!” said Ellen, as she came up to the fire; “I can only stay a moment. Oh, Fred, I am so glad that you have good news!”

“Well, but about what we were speaking of! Time is short!”

A shadow came over the girl’s face. Self, self,—she could not help seeing Frederick’s selfishness.

“My own Ellen,” said Frederick, coaxingly. He touched her fingers, and held them in his own,—as if they were dice!

“Mark me,” said Ellen;—“Augusta loves Welwyn; I know it,—I feel sure of it.”

“Hah!” Frederick coloured, and leant his arm on the carved mantle-piece.

“I ought to know the signs,” said Ellen, drooping her eyes; but the touching phrase did not move him.

“Well,” said Frederick, drawing himself up to his full length; “*Nous verrons*; you see, Ellen, I am ambitious.”

“I like you for it,” said the girl, proudly.

“And we will see whether—but no matter. Thank you very much Ellen; and I am afraid

I must return to these worthies, and their claret."

"Why, Fred, what a long time you have been away," said Mr. Lepel.

"Had a head-ache," said Fred ; "it's gone now."

"Let us drink the health of the future Prime Minister," said Lord Belden, laughing. They duly performed the ceremony, and Frederick made an amusing burlesque acknowledgment, and declared that he had nothing but the country's welfare at heart, with much facetiousness.

The address came out ; the writ came down ; the election came off. Frederick had the support of the Radicals, who voted by sympathy ; the tradesmen, who voted by interest ; Tories, who thought him better than a violent radical or chartist ; and a miscellaneous crew, who if they did not admire his principles, heartily appreciated his beer. Now-a-days, the "Battle of the Constitution" is fought in the public-houses. The "Times" had a lively

leader on the election, containing three epigrams and a quotation from Virgil, and quizzing Mr. Frederick Lepel most unmercifully, to the intense annoyance of his mamma.

But Frederick was too clever a man to be angry at such a clever attack, and besides, the next number announced his name as a "Member elected to serve in the Present Parliament."

His speech from the hustings (which, in Huskdale, is generally erected in appropriate proximity to Mr. Rutter's church) was a model of lucidity and terseness. It was clear, practical, and lively.

There is nothing in which our age is so totally deficient as oratory. We have a hundred speakers, but where is the orator? Where shall we find one from whose soul eloquence flows as naturally as poetry from the poet's lips? The true orator is the poet of the practical: he has to bring a great imagination and a deep heart to deal with the business of his day, and by making what is necessary, glorious—and elevating duty into something divine—he should be able to touch

the heart of the multitude abroad, as religion or poetry touches it at home. He must be an enthusiast: he must be sincere. He uses rhetoric, but he is not a rhetorician. He must be fearless and simple as a child. He must be warm with earnestness—so shall his words descend on the people like cloven tongues of flame—inspiring, sanctifying, beautiful! He must love the world as Jupiter loved Danaë, and pour himself all abroad upon it, in a shower of gold.

How different such a man from the patcher of gaudy phrases—the trim worker in filagree—the maker of philosophical toys—the Vaucanson of ingenious mental mechanism—the clever artist of sentiment and epigram! Burton tells us, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, of an Eastern monarch who had little birds trained to catch butterflies—a species of hawking that our rhetoricians much remind one of, in their flights. But let us wait; the Destinies may yet give us a voice in England, that all men will be glad to hear.

At the time of the Huskdale election of 184— the ingenious bribe of promising to

marry one of your constituent's daughters had not been invented; so Frederick Lepel had to make more commonplace professions, and thus, at last, succeeded in obtaining the six-hundred-and-fifty-eighth part of the management of the sceptre of King Alfred.

CHAPTER VII.

Il est trop vrai que l'honneur me l'ordonne,
Que je vous renonce, que je vous abandonne,
Que

VOLTAIRE. "Zaïre."

"UPON my word, a brilliant likeness!"

"Quite in the Reynolds style, indeed!"

"How much for a 'portrait in this style,' Mr. Welwyn?" said Miss Beaconsfield, facetiously.

Amidst this kind of brisk tattle was it that Welwyn entered the drawing-room of Dunreddin about noon, a few days after the events recorded in our last.

"What's the matter?" asked Welwyn, with some surprise. Augusta was sitting on the sofa, trifling with a book; Ellen Pierrepont

and some other damsels were fluttering round the table.

"Here it is!" said Ellen; and she held up a sheet of paper covered with heads in pen-and-ink, in Welwyn's dashing lines. The sheet was a perfect Hydra! There was a terrible similarity in the heads, too! The same majesty of brow, the same finish of outline, the same diadem of hair, characterized them all. 'Twas a constellation of Augusta Lepels!

Ellen handed the sheet over to Welwyn, with a little, pert, pretty bow. "I wonder who did these!"

Augusta leaned farther back, and held her volume up before her face.

"I did them," said Welwyn, very quietly. "I think the likeness very good."

"So do I," said Miss Beaconsfield, drily.

"How quickly they must have been dashed off," said the Pierrepont, with artistic innocence of look. "The fruit of an occupied fancy."

"Very likely," said Welwyn; and he looked

her in the face with such tranquil intellectual composure that she was astonished.

Augusta glanced at him, and felt a sudden thrill of pride. Welwyn folded the paper up deliberately, and presented it to her. The aforesaid damsels maintained a grave surprise; some of them, perhaps, interpreting Welwyn's coolness as mere indifference. For this, however, Augusta had too much sympathy, and Ellen too much quickness. Miss Beaconsfield really admired the whole scene, and whispered to Miss Pierrepont that they made love like crowned heads. Mrs. Lepel, who was employed upon some curious and unintelligible piece of needlework, as elaborate as the Bayeux tapestry, asked carelessly what they were all laughing at? Her's was that happy calmness of temperament which, never moved itself, never suspects emotion in others. It was a coldness of a pleasant sort—refreshing as the chill of a fountain in summer, or a rush of cool air on a sultry day.

She liked Augusta very much as an only daughter, and, (somewhat to her own surprise,)

a good deal more besides, for her rare and beautiful qualities. Augusta was of that peculiar class of the gifted who are not conscious of their gifts, and who, when they have done or said anything very fine, are as much surprised at it as others are delighted. She really blushed if she was "caught out" in an accomplishment, which gave occasion to some people to say that she was a "consummate actress"—a piece of praise which, considering that *they* were generally very bad actresses or actors, showed a degree of appreciation uncommonly rare, both on and off the stage.

Mrs. Lepel not being particularly ambitious, would have been quite willing that Augusta should have made a common-place match—with one of the country people of equal family—with a *very* well-endowed parson of good connections—or so forth. In the case of a very furious attachment, I dare say, she would have abated two avuncular baronets, a consobrinial lord, and a corresponding amount of rent. But see what it is to have a youth of abilities and perseverance in a family! Frederick was bent on his sister's doing in

the matrimonial what he himself proposed to do in the political world. Visions of an opening of Parliament, where one distinguished Lepel was addressed among the faithful Commons by royal lips, while his sister, as a Peeress, gazed on the imperial show, were present to that active-minded boy at an early age.

Having been educated by a private tutor (an inestimable advantage to a person of talents), he grew up without being influenced by the traditions of public schools or universities. While his cousins and contemporaries were learning to write what Peacock calls an Anglo-Celtic dialect of Latin, and to read a few bits of a few classic authors, Frederick was learning the learning of his day. Having thus got a taste for reading from what he liked to read, he came to the classics as a friend, and not as a slave or drudge. He had accordingly a far better acquaintance with the ancient literature in a few years than those who knew nothing else. When you come in contact with a crack orthodox youth, you will find that he can perhaps write tolerable

Alcaics, and can produce a decent, though woodenish, version of Tennyson's "Queen of the May" in Latin. Does he know anything of the Roman literature? Has he read anything of Cicero, except the "Fourth against Catiline," and the "De Officiis?" Ask his tutor! And breathe it softly, for perhaps the worthy man has not himself!

When the Lepels went abroad, Frederick enjoyed the further advantage—so strikingly pointed out by the author of "Coningsby"—of meeting remarkable men who would speak freely and boldly. And abroad a man will far easier get society, in proportion to his own personal merits, than in England. He met all sorts of strange thinkers—Germans, hot from metaphysics; Italians, mystical and liberal; Frenchmen of eclectic philosophy and downright worldliness of practice; and calm, accomplished, sceptical diplomatists, who would smile away the enthusiasm of a Festus, and disconcert a rebellious archangel in offering him a pinch of snuff! At all the great towns the Lepels were in the best society—as became a family standing equally well in the books of "Burke"

or "Coutts!" And Frederick mixed with every class—exiled democrats, Jesuits, and *Chasseurs d'Afrique*; he became addicted to dissipation, without the recklessness and gaiety which make it more pardonable and more ruinous; finally, he became that mixture of Manchester political theories and Parisian moral principles which we have seen. A terrible and repulsive young gentleman he would have been, but for a lively wit and a good-natured temperament.

It was on board the "Altercation," a steamer which then ran between Marseilles and Naples, that the Lepels encountered my Lord Belden. The old Mr. Lepel had known him as a boy at Clangour Castle. Indeed part of the estates of the Earl had once belonged to the Lepel family, which (as is often the case now-a-days) was of a better descent than its more magnificent and imperial neighbour. Frederick was a model of a travelling companion, and won the young lord's heart before he had told him his name. A man of the Clangour rank has no need to wrap himself up in the wretched exclusiveness of petty gentry and mushroom bourgeois. They were soon intimate. Frederick's

name was mentioned. Belden at once knew it—knew all about them—rushed into talk about “the county,” and joined the travelling circle. He was in gloomy spirits at that time, having recently, in his travels in Syria, lost his cousin (the Honourable H. Troubadour, son of Viscount ——), who was smitten by a *coup de soleil* as they were riding from Beyrout to Damascus, and died by the roadside near a little village, with Arab women crying beside him, and his mother’s name upon his lips.

Belden was good-natured and sensible to that degree, that he felt rather ashamed of being heir to the earldom of Clangour, without having done anything to deserve it. Perhaps he would not have objected to being taxed for it, to satisfy his conscience; and indeed so honourable a capitation-tax levied on the aristocracy would at once do credit to them, and do good to the revenue. He was an intelligent, indolent person, rather silent as regarded giving opinions, but who read many and many a sound page of knowledge, over a cigar, oftener than the world gave him credit for. And the liberality which his position prevented him

saw Frederick on horseback, trotting quietly out. He remained gazing at his vanishing figure, in a state of dreamy reverie—then turned. The drawing-room was empty.

“‘I am half-sick of shadows,’”

muttered Welwyn, quoting from the “Lady of Shalott.” There is a relief and an inspiration in quoting, when we are melancholy, such as the miser feels in counting and rattling his gold.

Welwyn wandered about the gorgeous room, musing. What weariness, what sickness it is, to be in love! Before we can get to the Elysian Fields, we *must* cross the Styx. And in England, we have a frightful amount of money to pay the boatman!

Notwithstanding how brutally hacknied the term Platonic Love has become, how vulgarized it has been, there is a divinity in Love which we would do well to remember. Instead of defining Love, suppose we were to begin by admitting that the best thing about it is, that it cannot be defined! Do you love your friend? If so, try and say why. When you have exhausted all the secondary parts of

your attachment, similarity of tastes, convenience, and the rest of it, is there not a spirituality at last about your feelings towards him, inexplicable as your own being, or as gravitation? Abandon yourself to that spirituality, friend. As the natural philosophers who write on mechanics tell us, that a stone set rolling down a hill covered with various obstacles, will yet, demonstratively, run by the directest line possibly conceivable; even so will the moral nature, flowing on, instinctively, and by a higher law than our volition, find the course best for it.

. . . . So mused Welwyn, reflecting on the love that day by day he felt growing in his being for Augusta. He paced the room anxiously.—He saw the handle of the door move. Instinctively he *felt* that she was there. The door opened, and she entered. They had never exchanged a word of confidence, but each knew that the other loved, as well as if it had been written on the sky.

“I did not know you were here, Mr. Welwyn,” said Augusta, simply. “I came to look for something I left.”

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“I did not know you were here, Mr. Welwyn,” said Augusta, simply. “I came to look for something I left.”

Welwyn knew she was speaking literal truth. It is a vulgar affection that quibbles and plays tricks. Those who play at hide-and-seek, are those who are not worth seeking.

"I am glad you have come, Miss Lepel," he said, "I have been wishing to speak to you."

Augusta was bending over the table. Her heart beat as she looked up, but her eyes met his gaze with a calmness as great as their beauty. They said "speak" as plainly as light. But, at that moment, Welwyn turned pale. No:—he would not compromise her, by attaching her affections to his miserable fortunes.

"You have much to forgive me for," he said. "Forgive me, if I am silent now."——

The door opened. Ellen Pierrepont came in. She saw the crisis. Inwardly, she exulted that she had come in time. "Ah, Augusta—let me help you to look for that." She drew her arm round Augusta's waist. A tear fell upon her curls. Welwyn left the room.

Two days passed. Frederick had come back from Clangour Castle in great good humour, and towards Welwyn was particularly kind and attentive. He knew how Welwyn loved his sister:—he knew how it was returned. But he was far too much a man of the world to cause any violent interference. What—a scene! A quarrel with a gentlemanly young man! Make his sister violently miserable, and Belden break off, and the family sympathetic and disturbed! Not he. But——!

'Twas breakfast time at Dunreddin. Everybody was down to breakfast that morning. Frederick had good spirits enough for two—and there were certainly two who wanted them in the party.

“You don't look as if you had slept well, Mr. Welwyn,” said Mrs. Lepel, innocently.

“He must have another blanket put on his bed!” said Frederick, chipping an egg. “Take some honey, Welwyn, *fragrantia mella*, my boy. I planted some heather under the advice of the Scotchman, who was here some time ago—on purpose for our bees.”

"What nonsense you talk, Fred," said his mother.

"An M.P. talk nonsense! Breach of privilege," said Frederick, laughing.

A servant entered with the morning's letters. Conspicuous among them was one for Welwyn—almost as long as a coffin, and about as cheerful—marked in the corner, *On Her Majesty's Service*, and stamped with the Admiralty Seal. There was an awkward pause while he opened it. He coughed. Frederick's eye rested, only for an instant, on his sister's face—and she turned it away transparent with blushes.

Welwyn was appointed one of the Lieutenants of Her Majesty's Yacht.

CHAPTER VIII.

A liberal nature and a niggard doom.

FORSTER : *Dedication of his Life of Goldsmith.*

WELWYN read the letter aloud. It was an excellent appointment—honourable, and with the certainty of promotion. The company congratulated him, and none more warmly than Frederick, who knew well what bitterness lurked in the good fortune. Welwyn folded the letter up deliberately, talked of the necessity of going, and so the breakfast passed over. All day long he was restless and disturbed—to a degree that he could not have conceived possible. Ah, it is all very well to fancy that we know the metaphysics of love! Where are

we when it comes in form? It is fine to theorise about gravitation; but woe to us when we fall from a tower, and it seizes us in practice! Welwyn tried to read newspapers, and found himself poring over the lists of marriages. What "disappointed" person has not done that, morbidly, sadly, dreamily, and found a new and wondrous interest excited by the names of strangers—names which before, he would have seen with equal indifference in the marriages or deaths! Who does not love love for the interest it invests everything with? How the "disappointed" sympathises with Miss Tomkins, who at last has gained her Charles—feels ready to embrace Charles himself—though perhaps the fellow is a prig or a screw, and is only marrying as he would take a shop or hire a house! How the "disappointed" watches an engaged couple employed in that deliciously romantic practice of the middle classes—purchasing furniture, and cheapening chimney ornaments! "Stony-hearted" Baker Street—thou that listenest to the sighing of accomplished girls, and drinkest the tears of law-students—think of the Disappointed in time!

Bah! Ever since Wealth married with Humbug, and produced their offspring—Respectability—their progeny has been increasing in power. And in a few years, unless modern notions alter, younger sons who want wives will have to rush in a body on the respectable neighbourhood—like Romulus and his friends on the Sabines—and end by founding a colony in one of the suburbs!

So Welwyn had to make preparations for going. He resolved to visit Mr. Fontenoy. The fresh spring air did his blood good, as he marched along the lanes to Heatherby. The snowdrops were just out; the spark of floral fire from which the flame of the crocus was to burn was just lighted in the earth; the hedges began to have a gleam of green, here and there. Everything was fresh and hopeful, and Mr. Fontenoy was sitting, in a warm dressing-gown, over a blazing fire in his study.

“Ah, Mr. Welwyn! Glad to see you, sir.” The fire was strong enough to roast an ox, but not to melt Mr. Fontenoy.

"I am about to go to sea again, sir," said his visitor. It was occurring to Welwyn that he would invite the confidence of this man, who, after all, was his uncle.

"To sea—indeed! I envy a man with an active profession. Such a fine profession, too!"

"I am not an object for envy, just now," said Welwyn. "The fact is," here Welwyn drew his chair nearer Mr. Fontenoy, "I was thinking of consulting you."

A horrible idea struck Mr. Fontenoy. Was the youth going to borrow money from him? Could he be so ignorant of the world, as to ask a relation? His face fell; Welwyn perceived it. As he did not suspect a meanness in any man, he guessed, at first, that Mr. Fontenoy had probably perceived signs of his unfortunate attachment, and feared the subject. Unhappily, however, that gentleman's first excitement took verbal form, and he muttered something about "rents." Welwyn saw his mistake, and laughed. If he had looked hurt or angry, Mr. Fontenoy would not have cared. The laugh galled him; to hurt

such a character's meanness is to wound his *amour propre*. He drew himself up—"I excite your merriment, Mr. Welwyn," he said, with a magnificent air.

Welwyn rose from his chair. "You mistake me if you think I wish to annoy you. But, Mr. Fontenoy, I was going to ask your opinion. You are my relation. I am your son's dearest friend."

"Mr. Welwyn," said Mr. Fontenoy, rising, too, "however honoured I should feel by your relationship, you will perhaps excuse me if I state that facts induce me to doubt that connexion." He played with some papers on the table with a hand that trembled a little. Welwyn's blue eyes rested on his hard, worldly features—large with inquiry. He waited in solemn silence for him to continue. Mr. Fontenoy felt very agitated. He wished that he could get into a rage, but was awed and kept cold by his companion's coolness. There was a silence.

"I have spoken, sir," said Mr. Fontenoy, seeing that Welwyn did not speak.

"Our's are not minds between which there can be much sympathy, I know," said Welwyn. "But perhaps you will be good enough to explain yourself."

"Well, sir," said Mr. Fontenoy, attempting a sneer, "I will try. I have reason to doubt, sir, whether my marriage—that marriage, sir, which alone would unite us in any way (you are not of the Fontenoy's, sir!)—was a legal marriage! It is a question, sir."

"Mr. Fontenoy!—Remember, sir, that even in *this* house you are in the presence of God," said Welwyn, mastering a cold sickness that struck him.

"It is my house, sir, and I won't be dictated to here!" said Mr. Fontenoy, moving to the bell-rope. Welwyn placed himself between him and the wall. "Wait." Sickened as he was, and shrinking from the disgraceful arbitrament of a personal struggle, he made up his mind to have a thorough explanation; and with the disciplined firmness of his profession, adopted the natural means.

"Be good enough to tell me precisely what

your words mean, Mr. Fontenoy? Do you call your son a bastard, and dishonour his mother's grave?" As Welwyn spoke, he accidentally saw his face in a mirror, and started at its deathlike pallor.

"Very forcible words—fine language, no doubt," said Mr. Fontenoy, who seemed to think that sneering was his safest point. "I speak as a man of business, sir, and say plainly, that I don't think the marriage which I was foolishly led into, as a boy, was a legal marriage. I don't consider the offspring of that marriage entitled to succeed to the hereditary estates of the house. I have reason to believe this, since you choose to push the subject; and arrangements, sir, are being made about it, which will change the condition of all parties."

"I won't talk to you of high feeling or generous sentiment," said Welwyn; "but according to your own small laws—which have the world for a god, and the belly for an altar—I believe you will ultimately find you are wrong."

“Ah—ha!” said Mr. Fontenoy, grinning in a ghastly manner, and showing his teeth, as a corpse does in death sometimes, “let those exult who win! Look here, sir,—look here!” he went on, taking up a bundle of papers. “Look at the boy’s extravagance! And, I hear, he has formed what he calls an attachment. I have news preparing for him!”

“God help him,” said Welwyn, calmly.

“If he marries, he may provide for himself.”

“God bless him,” said Welwyn, again.

“And if he leaves his profession, he may starve,” added Mr. Fontenoy, with a jerk. He pronounced the word “starve” with the gusto which a good worldly man gives it.

“God watch over him,” said Welwyn, once more. “And for you, sir,” he added, “good bye. Live on in your heartlessness, as a toad lives in stone!”

Mr. Fontenoy rang the bell. Welwyn moved to the door, and passed down stairs. A livery servant attended in the hall. The master came half way down stairs. “Good morning,

Mr. Welwyn. Charles, the door. A fine day!"

Welwyn passed silently out, and exulted as he found himself once more in the fresh spring air. On he went through the lanes that led to Dunreddin. He fell into a profound reverie on what he had just heard—on all he had lately suffered. He was so absorbed in his thoughts, that as he entered the avenue, it was with his head drooping on his breast. His cap pushed rather back, left the fair amplitude of his brow exposed, and his dark hair hung loosely about it. Two young ladies watched him from the window. One of them drew back. "What is the matter, Augusta?" said the other.

"Pshaw, you know, Ellen." Ellen was silent. She felt that she had played falsely and cruelly against her friend. And for what? For the love of Frederick Lepel! She had hurt a good heart for the sake of a questionable one; and had after all, perhaps, not gained that! The cold and bad part of the world owes the success which it generally meets in temporal matters a great deal to the alliance

of better natures which it employs and imposes on.

When Welwyn arrived, he learnt that the coach which he had determined to travel by, started from Huskdale early next morning. The Lepels had asked several people to dinner, in order that he might be—so Mr. Lepel had planned it—as lively, the last day of his stay, as possible.

“You have seen Mr. Fontenoy then?” said Mr. Lepel.

“Yes, sir,” said Welwyn, with a melancholy air.

“Has he any news of Singleton this time?” inquired the old gentleman, jocularly. My God, thought Welwyn, what will these good-hearted people think when they hear what I have heard! But he did not think it right to speak on the subject; so he made some off-hand answer. His gloominess was noticed by everybody. He felt it—so strove against it as much as possible. He would not leave unhappiness as his legacy to a family that had treated him so kindly. He determined to

have no scene—no explanation with Augusta. “Keep up to-day, oh, my heart!” he thought; “and when once I am away, break, if you will!” He longed, indeed, to be off, and alone with his sorrow.

After dinner, he found himself for a short time alone with Lord Belden. It was from this nobleman—as the reader has, of course, guessed—that Frederick had procured Welwyn’s appointment. Belden, who knew nothing of the intrigues of his young friend, naturally fancied that Welwyn knew the fact. Being a modest man, he felt the awkwardness of imposing a sense of obligation on anybody, so was desirous of putting Welwyn at his ease.

“I trust you will have a pleasant journey, Mr. Welwyn,” he said, kindly. “I’m afraid the new kind of duty will be dull to one who is familiar with war.”

Welwyn was thinking of something else at the moment. Perhaps he looked confused as he muttered a civil answer.

He wants to thank me, but is shy, poor fellow, thought his lordship. “We have not

much interest with the present people," he said, "or we might have got you something better."

"Your lordship is very good," said Welwyn, bowing. The sentence puzzled him a little at first. All at once the real state of things flashed on him. He had never suspected it before—strangely enough. But he decided not to say anything to Lord Belden about it; so repeated his thanks more gracefully, and changed the conversation. When Frederick came in, which he did soon after, he found them chatting on indifferent subjects.

The evening in the drawing-room was not lively. Welwyn was to leave extremely early in the morning, to catch the coach at Huskdale. And when the party broke up for the night, that was to be his last glimpse of Augusta. He sat, as he thought of it, gazing stupidly at her, as the bird of night gazes at the moon. The conversation flagged; so much so, that a sigh was audible in the silence. At last came the hour of good bye and good night. The door shut upon Welwyn, like the door of a vault or a prison.

In the early morning he awoke. Frederick was to accompany him over to Huskdale. They started from Dunreddin. They reached the George before the time.

As they were waiting in a private room, Frederick, who had been for some time walking about restlessly, stopped suddenly, and said :

"By-the-bye, Welwyn, you saw Mr. Fontenoy—did not you—yesterday?"

"Yes."

"I somehow dislike that man," said Frederick, with an appearance of warmth.

"I do so, thoroughly," said Welwyn. "He is cold, and mean, and mediocre."

"Here comes the coach!" cried Frederick, looking from the window. "And now, Welwyn," he continued, turning round to him, "I am going to say something to you, if I may take the liberty."

Welwyn turned suddenly red, and held his breath. He could not fancy but that Lepel must be about to allude to the One subject.

"I don't know anything about your circum-

stances, old boy, but perhaps you are put to expense in joining your ship. If so, you know—let me do the Rothschild. This is a great commercial country, as they say in Huskdale; and I shall be happy to lend you ——”

“Oh, thank you. You’re very kind. But a small patrimony suffices for a philosopher,” said Welwyn, kindly. He felt inclined to smile, as he thought how odd it was that this unscrupulous youth, who would have broken his heart to further his ambition, should make an offer so kind according to everybody’s ideas.

“Well, take a cigar,” said Frederick, laughing, as he unclasped his cigar-case. “Good bye!”

Welwyn jumped into the coach. It rolled off. Frederick was out of his sight in a moment.

Welwyn had to wait some time at Penguin, from which town he wrote off letters to his sister at Malta, and to Singleton. A paragraph

for the last of these was furnished by a strange incident which he saw in that town.

It chanced that he was strolling, in the morning, near an ancient church. The door was open. He went in, and saw that a baptism was about to be performed. The group were rather singular-looking people. The mother, a pretty, blue-eyed young wife ; her husband, a meek young man, of scholastic aspect, who seemed afraid of his baby. But *the* strange figure was that of an elderly gentleman in black, of erudite look, snuffy, absent, of solemn glance, and grave air. The quiet appearance of the whole scene struck Welwyn's imagination, and he leaned against a pew, and looked on.

The clergyman took up his station, and asked what name was to be given to the child—a boy.

"Julius Placidus," said the elderly gentleman, with a solemn expression of face.

The clergyman looked surprised. "I don't remember that name," he said, mildly.

"It will be found in '*Tacitus, the History*,'

book iii., chapter 84. (See Brotier's edition.) He was the tribune of the cohort who dragged Vitellius from his hiding-place."

The clergyman stared. The name was duly given.

"God bless me," mused Welwyn, "what a singular set!"

As they passed by him, the blue-eyed mother stared at him very hard, and he heard her mutter to her husband, "I have seen a face like that before."

"A face like that before," thought Welwyn. "Who in the name of goodness are they?"

The sexton lingered behind to close the church, and respectfully waited for Welwyn, who was gazing at the escutcheons. Welwyn, as he came out, handed him a trifle. "Who were these people here just now?" he asked.

"Them, sir? Dr. Helot, the schoolmaster. It was the christening o' the little one of his daughter, Lallyger, — her as married Mr. Rigg!"

"Married Mr. Rigg," soliloquized Welwyn, as he strolled away, almost stumbling over the

graves. "Married Mr. Rigg! Will Augusta marry a *Lord* Rigg, I wonder!

" ' Keep thee, to-day,
To-morrow, for ever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved !'

" Ah, no—no! My thoughts—my being—
turn as restlessly to her ever—as the vane on
yon spire to the wind!"

END OF BOOK FOURTH.

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Book the Last.

If he had been arrogant and grasping, if he had been faithless and false—if he had always been ready to blacken and defame those with whom he had sat at meat,—he would have passed many men who passed him.

SYDNEY SMITH. (*On Sir Jas. Mackintosh.*)

Go where he will, the wise man is at home,
His hearth, the earth; his hall, the azure dome,
Where his clear spirit leads him, there's his road,
By God's own light illumined and foreshowed.

EMERSON.

CHAPTER I.

Everything thou hast touched, I love; everything thou speakest of, I love: thy hand played with these vine-leaves,—I wear them in my bosom.

SIR E. B. LYTTON'S *Zanoni*.

AND now, oh, kindly reader, whose cigar I have accompanied, or whose sofa I have shared, let us follow the swallow and fly again to the South. We cross France, we enter on a purple wilderness of sea, the eye is dazzled by the silver scales of sunlight on its surface; presently, a white island emerges from the ocean—like a dove from violets,—it is Malta. It is summer time in Malta; titans of flowers

begin to threaten Heaven with their nodding heads,—the almond trees are loaded with the sleek hairy pods which hold the fruit ; it is very hot—so that sometimes in the middle of the day the air wraps one round like scented cambric !

In 184—, Her Majesty's Ship, "Cleopatra," 120, came out to assume the command of the Mediterranean, with Admiral Sir Booby Boosing on board, and fifty pounds' worth of Madeira in the midshipman's gunroom. The "Cleopatra" was the last result—the crowning specimen—of modern naval improvement. From the days of grand old Blake—when waggon-loads of silver taken from the Spanish, reeled through London streets—to the days of the "Cleopatra"—what a change ! From Blake dying in his rude cabin in the English Channel—to Boosing drawing table-money of 800*l.* a-year to feed friends—what a change ! Of the mere physical changes in the service, in living, and so on, perhaps much complaint

should not be made,—forms of living have altered everywhere. But from Blake and his officers, bent on doing God's work on the waters, and with a faith as strong as their oak ships, to Booring, with his belief in the dockyard, and reverence for the powers that are *in*,—Lieutenant Primby's dandyism, and Captain Paggles' piano,—there has been a change by no means for the better!

The "Cleopatra" having anchored in Malta, and been subsequently moored at a "broth of a *buoy*" in the Grand Harbour, remained there,

"As idle as a painted ship,
Upon a painted ocean."

Fontenoy was appointed to her, shortly after her arrival—the "Patagonian" having, by this time, been ordered home; her commission was nearly over, but the paying-off time was somewhat accelerated by an accident. The "Patagonian," in fact, in a fit of rhinocerean playfulness, bumped herself on shore

on the coast of Spain,—the rudder was carried away, the false keel was damaged ; she was ordered to proceed to England, and Captain Pannikin retired into private life once more.

Duty on board the “Cleopatra” was of a light and airy character. The hands were turned up to drill at daylight, when the midshipmen, in blanket trowsers and otherwise gay *deshabille*, ran about actively enough,—the watches were slept through with praiseworthy regularity,—general quarters were occasionally indulged in, when a newly-invented trumpet for summoning the boarders caused much fun, noise, and confusion. During the ship’s company’s dinner time, it was found necessary to partake of ices, which an old Frenchman brought off in a curious machine, nice and cool ; plum-cake is not a very absurd concomitant of lemon ice—and after both, a cigar is refreshing. Besides, the gunroom mess did not dine till six, when they partook

of some dozen of made dishes, &c., served in a really respectable style, upon china, adorned with the mess arms (a donkey rampant), and accompanied by iced wine. To live near the shore of a populous island without landing there, is at least tedious, which was probably the reason why the gentlemen of the "Cleopatra" were constantly landing. To facilitate landing, a good boat should be always at hand,—they *had* a good boat, always at hand, and adorned with a mess flag; one boat is scarcely enough for many people,—other boats were constantly hovering about. Boats are expensive, when constantly employed—and this was perhaps the reason why, when a batch of youngsters came off in one, they were each so anxious not to be the last man in getting out. The last man cannot have money always—and this was *undoubtedly* the reason why Jigger, of the "Bustard," was frequently seized by the leg by the boatman, when the ardour of pro-

fessional duty made him show unusual haste in leaving!

It was the middle of the day,—several gentlemen of the “Cleopatra” were seated in a cabin on the main-deck,—it belonged to the third lieutenant, who allowed it to be used as a lounge. Pug Welby was reclining on the bed, which in the day-time became a sofa,—Blanchard, a mate, and Sutherland, a midshipman, were seated in chairs,—also a youngster with an odd mark on the tip of his nose, produced by the incision of a penknife and the rubbing in of salt—a process which had recently been performed on him by an “oldster” of South Sea taste.

“How’s the leg, Pug?” said Blanchard, alluding to the accident which had befallen him some months before.

“Capital,” said Pug, stretching it out; “I wish I had not broken it a second time,—it was that that delayed it.”

“I shouldn’t wonder,” said Blanchard,

yawning ; “ can you kick with it,—try it on the youngster ! ”

Little Pipp, the youngster alluded to, jumped up in a fright. “ Please not, Mr. Welby ! ” He was a little, pale boy, of sickly constitution, and had been sent to sea by his father, a rich merchant, at the instigation of a second wife.

“ Adjust him,” said Pug, with a severe air. Pipp was seized by Blanchard and Sutherland, and placed in a convenient position,—he raised a dismal howl,—Pug let him go ; at that instant Fontenoy came in—he had a note in his hand, and seemed somewhat anxious.

“ Oh ! Welby—would you mind keeping my ‘ four to six ’ watch ? ” he said.

“ Hem ! Anything particular ? ”

Singleton coloured slightly. “ Yes, I have promised to go on shore.”

“ Well, sit down a minute, old fellow. Don’t be in such a hurry. How different you are to what you used to be.”

"Am I?" said Singleton, smiling, and tapping with his fingers on the breech of the gun which occupied part of the cabin.

"You have lost your gaiety, and you are getting monkish. You talk like an epitaph. There's as much difference between you now, and what you were last winter, as between Æneas on the course, and Æneas drawing the Snobkins' *calèche*, which is his present employment."

Singleton smiled. "You'll keep the watch at all events, in spite of my degeneracy."

"Yes—but be a man, and drop in at Ricardo's. Good bye." Singleton departed. He descended to the cockpit, and presently popped through the middle-deck port, holding a small carpet-bag in his hand. The boatman into whose boat he got, pulled away towards Burmola. Singleton left the carpet-bag at an inn, and then took his way to a square not far off. He knocked, and was admitted by an old woman.

"Is the Father in ?

She motioned to him to go up stairs. As he reached the door of the room, he fancied he heard voices talking inside. He tapped.

"Come in."

Singleton entered. Father Adda was alone—at his table. Singleton glanced round the apartment, curiously and uneasily. There were no signs of any other human being there. The priest noticed his look.

"You thought you heard something?"

"Yes," said Singleton, colouring.

"I was reading aloud. But sit down, Mr. Fontenoy. You are looking rather unwell. Your eye is unnaturally bright. The colour on your cheek flushes and goes abruptly. Take care—there is a *dira cohors februm* in this island, always in full force in summer."

"Yes, indeed," said Singleton, with a sigh ; "but see, I have brought you some of your books back." As he spoke, he laid on the

table two or three volumes of controversial theology. "Bad enough is fever; but worst of all is the fever of the mind, with its thirst for truth and peace."

The Father gazed at him, adjusted the skull cap on his pale forehead, and wrote something with a pen.

Singleton moved about the room, restlessly. "Father, how long have I known you—since we met in St. John's?"

"Some months;—but, Fontenoy, do you like the Latin of that Treatise? It seems to have the homely, rather slatternly garb of one who used the tongue for familiar purposes; it wants the finish, the dignity, the compactness of the classic writers."

Singleton turned the pages of the book listlessly; he threw it down again; then carelessly turned to another.

"That is a strange face, that face of Loyola! and what a story, his! My God—when one thinks of these grand enthusiasts

one ought to blush at the sight of their portraits."

"You read the 'Life' I gave you, I think," said Father Adda.

"Yes; but—poor human nature—one is staggered at such stories as his getting a miraculous insight into the mystery of the Trinity, and so on." The Father was silent. Then he again asked Singleton to sit down, and why he was so restless. The colour hovered about Singleton's cheek as he did so. He sat down, and leaned upon his hands; then, suddenly he raised his head, and stood up once more.

"Father," he said, "I have pondered deeply on what I have heard and learned from you. For years I have hungered and pined for a principle of Faith and action; and now, something in my heart whispers that I may yet find peace in your Church!"

The priest's eyes brightened calmly, and their light seemed reflected on his brow.

“ My son,” he said, “ these feelings are not my creation ; but, beware how you neglect impulses which we have a right to believe, may be the vibrations of the heart under the touch of the finger of God.”

Singleton was suddenly awed ; then he stopped short, and said that he must go. The Father rose to conduct him ; they paused on the threshold. Singleton turned back,—

“ Give me your blessing.”

“ With all my heart.”

“ I shall see you again soon.”

“ In the mean time—Peace to you.”

“ Good day.”

And away went Singleton. He reached the little inn where he had been before the visit. He went in, changed his uniform for plain clothes, and once more crossed the harbour in a boat for Valetta ; it was about four o'clock. He went to a house in Strada Forni ; a horse was waiting for him ; he mounted it, and rode off. As he passed the walls of

Florian Gardens, the carriages of the garrison people were moving about ; the Brantons, too, were abroad ; Dulcimer was leaning languidly back in their carriage.

“ How do, Fontenoy ? ” he said, as Singleton came near them.

“ I hope you are well,” said Fontenoy, taking off his cap to the party.

“ Do you know that there is to be no Regatta this year ? The Admiral is opposed to it ; and says that if they have one the boats must race with their guns in.”

“ Indeed.”

“ However, there’s one thing ; a boat can’t break its knees if it does lose,” said Dulcimer, smiling.

“ You’ve been reading, I see,” said Fontenoy, drily.

“ Ha, hem ! What did you give for that fellow, if it’s a fair question,” said Dulcimer, glancing at Singleton’s horse.

“ A dollar for the evening ! Good day ! ”

Singleton trotted off, and presently broke into a canter. "These people kill me," he muttered. "Fancy it's taking six thousand years for the earth to turn up such a set."

He cantered on along the high road towards Citta Vecchia; and presently he turned his horse's head down a lane, and proceeded at a slow pace. He passed through a small village with a church, with some high trees in front of it. A Maltese boy came running out of a house to hold the horse; Singleton dismounted, and proceeded on.

Meanwhile, within a few hundred yards of him, in the garden of an old-fashioned house of the times of De L'Isle Adam, strolled Ivy Welwyn. She looked something between a nun and a naiad! Her dress was simple and sombre. Her black hair, which seemed steeped in darkness, was plainly arranged. Her beautiful features were pale. But every now and then her deep violet eyes gleamed with such a lively light, and her slight figure moved with

such a playful grace, that you wondered how she could be solemn. It suggested "Il Penseroso," set to music by Auber!

In her hand she held a string of ebony beads. She raised them, and played with them, carelessly. Her fancies wanted in the light of love, like waves in the rays of the moon. She moved through the grass of the garden, and listened. Not a sound! Mechanically, her white fingers arranged the beads, as she mused.

"For two days, he has not been here! He is right. I have told him, that for me to love is sin. He spares me sorrow and penance. I should like to know that he is well!"

Down dropped a bead.

"What a load I have to carry to the confessional! and I come away with a heavy heart, still,—his presence relieves me. I hope he is not ill!"

Down dropped a bead.

"The greater my love, the greater my guilt,

—as the oranges of Sicily are then ripest when they most resemble blood! Oh, my cousin! though you have taken my heart, let me save my soul! Is he ill?”

Down dropped a bead.

“Signora!”

She turned,—the beads dropped. The old lady who lived with her as a guardian,—long a friend of the Welwyns and of the house into which the fathers of Fontenoy and Welwyn married,—came out into the garden.

“Your cousin is coming!”

She started, and stamped her little foot on the grass, in anxiety and indecision. “I am gone!—say I am away!”

She bounded in at the hall door, and left the old lady alone. A sharp rapping was heard at the garden gate,—there was Singleton. He came to the gate with breathless hope and eagerness in his eyes,—he never fancied that Ivy would not be in the house,—he did not dare!

"Where is Ivy?"

"She is away, Signor,—she is out."

"What! Do you jest?" His lips seemed hardening into marble.

"She is gone out, Signor. You are not alarmed, are you?"

He turned away, and, pulling his cap over his eyes, dragged slowly along, like a wounded man. There was a gathering of sorrow swelling in his heart and pressing on him, like the rising waves on one who has been tied to a stake on the beach, and left to die in the full of the tide.

"Singleton!"

"Ivy! Oh, my heavens,—how cruel you are!"

She had come running out, and she stood there before him with face flushed and eyes trembling with light.

"Forgive me, Singleton,—I trifled with you."

He leaned against the wall, and put his

hand to his heart,—for a moment he had turned as pale as death. “Ivy,” he said; “in the name of God, never trifle so again. Tell me that you will never see me more, and let me go and die; but do not make my heart a toy, and break it in sport!”

“You know I would not, Singleton. It is I who suffer,—and for you.”

“Well—don’t cry, dear; your tears burn my heart. Look up. The sky is red with roses and gold. Do you see that bridge of white cloud? Darling, I should like to wander on it with you, and we would forget the world for ever. Ivy, do you listen?”

“I have listened too much to you, Singleton: I must tell you again and again, that the language of love is out of place when it is addressed to me. What does it mean?” and Ivy turned pale. “We cannot be united. You know to what future I have devoted myself, and you—you are but a boy!”

“My child,” interrupted Singleton, “you

make me miserable ; be still, I am your slave, but I cannot obey you in this. Bid me do anything, and I will do it—except forget you.”

The girl was silent. The silence was broken by the sound of the church bell in the neighbouring village : it filled the air with voices. The lovers looked at each other's eyes in silence. The ebony beads had fallen on the grass, and sparkled in the green setting. Singleton picked them up.

“When I am with you,” he said, “my thoughts string themselves in prayers, like these beads.”

“Think more of the prayers than of me,” said the girl, solemnly.

“One day, perhaps, we shall kneel together under the same roof. Since I have known you, dear—look up, Ivy, I can speak better when I see your eyes—I have experienced again that happy, holy feeling which I first felt, when, as a boy, I awoke to the know-

ledge that sun and stars are here for a higher purpose than to give us warmth and light. Ivy, you have been a priest to me; and sometimes I think that that great Church, to which our mothers belonged, ought to be my soul's home. Ivy, your love keeps me in purity and aspiration: it keeps my holiest feelings alive, as breath keeps the flame flickering as it rises towards heaven. My thoughts float upon the river of your hair. It is with my whole nature that I adore you. I love your pure spirit—I love your sweet face.”

He spoke with such passion that the beads trembled and rattled in his hand. He felt a thrill across his lips as if a silken thread quivered through them. The girl had listened with downcast eyes,—rising and falling in emotion, as a bird rises and falls on the bosom of a swelling sea.

“Ivy—speak to me—do you love me?”

“Oh, yes, yes!” cried the girl, passionately, while her eyes glistened with the spray from

her heart "That is why I am so unhappy. Oh, God, this is sin! Go, Singleton, go, leave me to solitude and prayer—go!"

She stamped her little foot upon the grass. The violet fire in her eyes was most painful to see; the tears started down her cheeks, and drying suddenly, left a scorching trace. Her whole nature was struggling with the heavy burden of care that her strange and dark education had imposed on her.

—— Poor Ivy! I cannot describe her properly—I love her too well!

Singleton did go, and they parted more calmly; but he did not know what she suffered: day by day she was getting more pale. There *are* people in the world who can watch such changes in those for whom they ought to be ready to shed their heart's blood, quite calmly,—can measure their misery as coolly as an undertaker measures a corpse. Not so Singleton.

It was twilight as he drew near Valetta. The reins had fallen on his horse's neck, and he was again musing. As he cast his eyes on the road, he saw the shadow of a figure cast there by the moon, which was just up. He looked behind.

"What! Father Adda!"

"Yes," said a calm voice. It was the priest's.

"Where have you been?"

"To Bokkar."

That was the name of the village which was close by Ivy's house; the mention made Singleton feel somewhat uncomfortable.

"Indeed. I have been near there," said Fontenoy, quietly.

"I saw you; I did not like to delay you. But you see I have overtaken you."

"Yes, my horse carries double,

"Post equitem sedet, atra Cura,"

as Horace says. No wonder I came so slow."

"There is peace for us all if we seek it," said the priest, "if the care be a worthy care. We must distinguish between divine sorrow and the earthly sorrow we cause ourselves."

Singleton glanced at the pale features lighted up by the moon. Woman's face had never made them smile, nor man's laughter met a hearty response there. His creed! it had marked itself in wrinkles on his brow! "Heavens!" thought Singleton, "if he *should* be deluded—what a life his will have been!"

"Who goes there?" cried the sentry at Strada Reale Gate.

They answered, and passed through.

CHAPTER II.

Secreti loquimur. Tibi nunc, hortante Camena,
Excutienda damus præcordia.

PERSIUS, *Sat.* 5; 21, 2.

“ LASH up hammocks, sir !”

Singleton felt his swinging couch vibrate as a rude hand touched the “ nettles,” and woke suddenly from a deep, dreamless sleep,—one of those from which we wake with a sort of wonder, and begin to fancy that death may not be so terrible after all. He had been reading till nearly daylight. He cast his languid eyes round; the cockpit was just

beginning to stir into life ; gentlemen were stationing themselves before their toilette apparatus on the amputation-table ; queer little looking-glasses were suspended here and there, in which flickered the reflection of the yellow light of lamps ; shouts were heard of “ pass the word for Tomkins—pass the word for Higgs,” as each riser required his marine valet. There was a splashing of water,—an odour of bear’s grease,—a rattling of chest lids. One youth, with nothing on but his trowsers, was standing under the hatchway, poking his head up the wind-sail to monopolize as much air as possible ; a kick soon displaced *him*, we may be sure. Presently comes a thump ; a cartouch-box, or perhaps even a bayonet, rattles down from the lower-deck, where the marines are cleaning their accoutrements ; then a curse and a grumble ; a light cloud of pipe-clay floats in the air. Anon comes a sharp pop,—it is soda-water,—the cork strikes Dalton, who is trying to shave

at the risk of his life; there is a general laugh. In a short time, some dozen or so of the mids are assembled round the amputation-table; conversation begins.

“Where did you go, Harry, after the Bloakers’ spread?”

“To Ricardo’s.” Splash, splash. “Lend me some honey-water, Charley.”

“Do you d—d whelps use honey-water!” growled an old mate.

“Yes,” cried Blanchard, “when one can get it good. Do you like it, Mr. Hoggles? I confess, for my part, that Kalydor is absolutely necessary to my existence in this climate! It lies so fragrantly on the cheek at night,—like the breath of the beloved one! It keeps off the mosquitoes, too; I hear a mosquito, now. Ah, it has bit me.”

Blanchard subsided into agonized silence.

“Mr. Blanchard! the first-cutter is called away,” said a Quartermaster, coming down the ladder; Blanchard commanded that

boat, and spent a small income in keeping her nice.

“D—n and confound the first-cutter,” said a youngster, who had two uncles bishops, and one a dean of noted piety.

“Youngsters must not swear,” said the old mate, who affected propriety, as it gave him an excuse for thrashing the youngsters.

“I’ll be up directly,” said Blanchard, to the Quartermaster. “Bless me, where’s my sponge? I had a sponge that Undine might love! Hang it, one can never get a chance of dressing like a gentleman here; I’ll cut the service, and join the Guards!”

“Nice girl, the eldest Bloaker,” said a youngster; “has she got any money?” (The speaker was sixteen years old.)

“Hem, hem; take care!” cried somebody. A cabin door was observed to open stealthily; it was that of the chaplain, Mr. Mawker. Mr. Mawker used to report all impropriety to the Commander, who was serious. Mr. Mawker

was a divine with large lay whiskers ; he had jilted ladies at almost every port in the Mediterranean, and dared scarcely land anywhere for fear of being horsewhipped by an indignant brother.

“ I hate spies,” cried a midshipman, in a meaning tone. Mr. Mawker’s door gradually closed.

“ The cutter’s manned, Mr. Blanchard,” cried the Quartermaster, coming down again.

“ It must wait,—I’m dressing,” said Blanchard, furiously, and perspiring over a tight Wellington. Away went the Quartermaster. Down he came again,—“ You must come, sir, or the Commander will send a file of marines for you, he says.”

“ Curse the boots,—oh, Lord!” ejaculated Blanchard. The Quartermaster went on deck again. In three minutes there was a great rattling on the after ladder, and down came a Serjeant of marines, with a party ! Blanchard was suffering the torture of the boot ;—James

the Second would have enjoyed the spectacle he presented.

“ Now, sir ; please, sir,” said the Serjeant, embarrassed. “ Here’s your trowsers, sir ! be quick, please. I have orders to bring you as you are, sir.” Blanchard made desperate exertions, and at last, hurried on his clothes, and got away.

Fontenoy had been slowly dressing himself during this scene ; he now left the cockpit and went up into the gunroom to breakfast. O ! the luxury of a bunch of green grapes cooling in chilly water, some new bread, and a pat of fresh butter on a strawberry leaf ! Such, with a cup of tea, was his morning repast. He sat at it very silently ; he was languid. When he had finished, he lay down on the lockers, and leaning on his left arm, gazed at the sea. He felt a strange sensation coming on, and yet accompanied with a feeling that all was right. The sea was heaving

slowly up and down before him, like a purple pall. Were the waves violets? A boat passed, painted green and yellow; the sunlight gleamed on it; it looked like a dragon-fly. Who was playing music in it? By degrees the music increased, and the waves seemed to have bells in their bubbles;—bells, —bells,—bells!—and his memory grew miraculously vivid. Heatherby came before him. He remembered that on the 14th September, 1839, there was somebody to dinner; he was a little man with spectacles, who talked about the corn-laws! What made him remember him now? he had never thought of him since! He was wonderfully amused by the little man; he was so grotesque. He began to laugh,—a strange rattling laugh,—like the noise of Ivy's ebony beads.

Fontenoy was getting delirious.

Ebony beads! The waves seemed to have black beads for bubbles; up and down rose the beads; then a hand, a hot hand, seemed

to pass across his brow ; he resigned himself to it. It was wrapping a hot leaf round him,—a leaf from a palm tree, reeking of sand ; the sand pricked him. Oh, God!—Ivy, make them take it away ! It began to go : a slow, drowsy heat came over him ; the water seemed so hot that one would be afraid to bathe in it. Still his head leaned on his arm ; the arm seemed to have hardened there. Fragments of old poems began to whirl through his mind,—he read them ; there they were before him, in print ; he would swear to the particular print. What a slow heat was destroying him !

It was the Sirocco ! The Sirocco wind had come ; it rested on the stony island,—a glare of hot air : a wind that you would like to strike,—for which you feel a hatred as for something humanly horrible. It came like a ghost from the sandy Desert,—the Hell of winds. It was a wind that Æolus had sent to the Desert for punishment ; it came, and

had absorbed the horror of a thousand leagues of sand into one soul : everything drooped ; there was languor in the look of stones and rocks ; the nerves of men slackened. Fontenoy lay on the cushions,—stretched in languor,—like the tongue from the mouth of a weary lion !

Presently, a change came over him. Ivy's fingers were tapping at his temples ; he thought it cruel, but that at the same time she was only in play. He found his thoughts dancing, and was improvising song. Boat after boat crossed past the ship,—full of Knights of the Order of St. John ! Suddenly, the water seemed wonderfully cooler ; how hot he was, and how cool the water ! he would try to cool himself ; he laughed to think how he would revel in it ; he moved.

A Splash ! The upper deck of the “ Cleopatra ” was all in confusion. “ Let go the life-buoy ! No,—call away a boat ! Who is it ; how did it happen ? ”

"They're picking him up, sir," said the officer of the watch, to the Commander.

"Send for the doctor," said the Commander.

"It is Mr. Fontenoy, is it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very strange ; very strange," he said.

The boat came alongside. Fontenoy was carried on the middle-deck ; his long black hair drooped across his face. They soon recovered him from the effects of the water, and he awoke,—to fever. Fever had been hovering about him for several days ; it had dodged him in his walks, breathed on his sleep, lighted on him and darted off again, like a bird among trees ; now it had him in fruition, in full possession.

"I think he had better be sent to the hospital, at once," said the Doctor.

"Perhaps so," said the Commander.

Blanchard had to take him there, with one of the Assistant-Surgeons, in the first cutter. The Naval Hospital of Malta is a fine building

on the left side of the harbour as you enter, near Bighi Bay. They landed at a long flight of stairs ; they passed in at the gate ; there was a fine garden stretched at the back of the building, through which they passed. Seamen in flannel dressing-gowns and caps,—some pale, with bright staring eyes,—some limping with wounds hardly healed,—were sunning themselves there.

They passed under a colonnade at the left wing of the building, and through some passages, into the Midshipman's ward ; a fine, spacious room enough, looking out on a colonnade facing the harbour. There were four little beds in it, each with white mosquito curtains, each screened in with a large green screen, and each with a little table for books and convenience ; two young gentlemen, in the "convalescent" state, were sprawling on sofas. They were rather glad to find that somebody had got a fever,—it was such a bore to have no company !

Fontenoy was put to bed, under the direction of the amiable and accomplished old Surgeon (Dr. W——) ; the “nurse” was one Beppo, a Maltese, who always had a comic grin on his face, which grew ten times more comic, in effect, when he wished to be serious ; he was a good-hearted creature, Beppo, and singular enough altogether. Singleton was put to bed with every kindness.

“There de barley-water, Missa Fontenoy ; you lie quiet,—you soon be well.” And he chucked Singleton under the chin, and patted his cheek. Singleton gave a faint smile, and lay there, drearily counting the window-panes. Oh, those window-panes ! up and down the lofty window his dreary eye ranged a hundred times a-day !

“Beppo—when will we have tea ?” asked one of the convalescents.

“De usual time,—not before,—you know, Missa Twigg ;” and Beppo moved off.

“Bigg, what a fellow Beppo is,” said Twigg

“Yes.”

They relapsed into silence ; Singleton heard the long, heavy, intolerable sigh of *ennui*.

“Bigg,—what could you eat now ?” asked Twigg. This was a favourite theme with the convalescent ; indeed, the “half-diet,” a leg of fowl with a potato, or something of that sort, was but meagre fare !

“Let me see !” said Bigg, thoughtfully. “Say a baked cod’s head and shoulders ; did you ever try it baked, Twigg ? With oysters, I mean, and bread-crumbs—done brown—and steaming, directly the spoon goes in, like mad !”

“Or,” said Twigg, “some kidneys in wine sauce ; or, a beef-steak pudding—as they do ’em at the Cheshire Cheese, in Fleet Street. Do you know that place ?”

“Dear Fleet Street !” ejaculated Bigg. “Oh, Twigg, if you and I were walking arm-in-arm into the Rainbow !”

Again there was a pause,—then they spoke

in a lower tone,—they were discussing the regulation by which nothing was permitted to pass the gate without a “pass” signed by the Surgeon.

“I’ve an idea,” said Twigg. “The old fellow never objects to letting in preserves; I’ll write a pass for preserves,—he’ll sign it,—we’ll add the word ‘meat,’—and have in some preserved grouse!”

That this “dodge” was as successful as its ingenuity deserved, Singleton heard from audible sounds of mastication and chuckling, as he lay awake at night.

Meanwhile, the mess of the “Cleopatra” had gone to dinner,—it was a “crack” mess,—they were just seated about six o’clock,—one or two fellows were glancing at the bills of fare which lay on the table. The table was adorned with wine—the decanters of which bore that grateful haze which marks that the wine is iced. Omelettes, ragouts,

and fricassees of various sorts were being demolished ; the light from the ports came modulated by green curtains.

“ Poor Fontenoy ! ” said Pug Welby, feelingly. “ How devilish odd !—how did it really happen ? ”

“ I was in the gunroom,” said a mate ; “ he jumped out.”

“ God bless me !—Is that turkey before you, Clarendon ?—Jumped out !—delirious ! ”

“ Hem ! ” said Clarendon, meaningly.

“ Why, what does that mean,—that ‘ hem,’—anything behind the scenes ? ”

The speaker nodded mysteriously. “ Wine, Pug ? ”

“ With pleasure ; I’ll speak to you by-and-bye.”

They wine and nodded,—there were glances of mystery round the table, and everybody ate with increased emotion.

“ I know something——” began a mate.

“ D——d little,” muttered Pug, *sotto voce*.

"About the affair of Fon?"

"Yes.—Youngster, never take a bottle by the bilge in such weather as this; who's to drink after your d——d hands have been heating it?—There was a girl in the case, for one thing."

"He has not hit it," said Clarendon to Pug, aside.

"Ah! he is eccentric. Pass the preserved pears."

So tattled the mess. But, after dinner, a select party assembled to smoke, at the bow port on the main-deck; Pug was there, and Clarendon, and one or two more.

"You see," said Clarendon, puffing away, and with his white hand resting on the breeching of a gun near him; "I think it was a case of ——"

"Of what?" asked Pug, eagerly, while the rest of the group stirred themselves to listen.

"Attempted suicide!"

"God bless me!" said Pug, scattering the

cigar ash on his white drill trowsers as he started. "But how,—what? Who the doose would kill himself if he had any money?"

"Oh, you're making a jest of it," said Clarendon, seriously and quickly; "I tell you I'm in earnest. The fact is, there are some queer stories about Singleton. Passing over that confounded eccentricity which takes him to places and people that nobody else goes to—look, for instance, at his making such a chum of a priest——"

"And, hang it! the Roman priests ain't gentlemen, you know," struck in Bungle, a mate.

"Well, well, go on, Clarendon," said Pug, impatiently.

"It's gone out again, *peste*!" said Clarendon, looking at his cigar; "but what I was going to say is,—there is a fellow here who knows Fontenoy's dad, and all about their county. The father originally made, as was always thought, a queer match; but now, it seems

it's dubious whether they were married, and ——”

“Whew!” went Mr. Pug Welby, with a prolonged whistle, “‘nobody’s son,’ as Chesterfield said! The world is a strange business—you never fall on your feet unless you alight on somebody else’s shoulders: you must have somebody you can stick to ——”

Mr. Welby stopped, and stared. Just as he spoke these last words, a stranger approached them: it was Father Adda. There was a singular contrast between the pale, decorous sombre priest, and the free-and-easy knot who were chatting and smoking before him. They all looked up in surprise, and Bungle put his tumbler to his lips, and stared over the rim of the glass at him with the most marked astonishment.

“Do I intrude, gentlemen?” said the Father, bowing with much grace; “I came to see Mr. Fontenoy, is he on board?”

“Sinkly, a chair,” said Welby, readily;

"sit down, sir : he has had an accident, I am sorry to say."

And Welby, in a polite and rather off-hand way, told Father Adda the whole story, holding his cigar down that it might not offend him, while Bungle stared at his sacerdotal garb with much curiosity. The priest thanked him, bowed gravely again, and withdrew.

"Be sure your sins shall find you out," said Bungle, affecting a nasal snuffle, as the figure of the Father disappeared.

"'Gad, mine generally find me at home," said Pug, philosophically. The group rose, and walked aft again. A party of lieutenants and ward-room men were smoking in that part of the deck between the guns, and discussing the regular subjects as usual. Captain Bulrush of the "Roarer" was among them ; that remarkable brig of his had been under sailing orders for eight-and-forty hours : it was blowing a fine fresh breeze right out of the Grand Har-

bour, but Bulrush was waiting for his "washing" to come off.

So things were progressing on board, while Singleton lay in his bed with the fever—music playing in his brain. In the middle of the night the ward were disturbed by a deep low groaning from another part of the building. Singleton was awake, and morbidly wondered who the poor fellow was; his two comrades, Messrs. Twigg and Bigg, were snoring in their respective beds. Then Singleton heard the snoring interrupted, and weary exclamations, then——

"Twigg, are you awake?"

"Yes."

"Cursed row—what's that cursed row?" (a growl.)]

"Wish somebody would put a hot potatoe in the fellow's mouth," said Twigg. *The groaning ceased soon.* The house was very still after it.

At seven Master Beppo made his appearance to call them.

"TabEEP* coming, genelmen," he said, announcing that the surgeon was beginning his rounds.

"Hillo, Beppo, how's Mrs. Beppo?" said Twigg.

"How Mrs. Twigg, sare?" retorted Beppo.

"You impudent fellow! But, Beppo, who was making that row last night?"

"Man called Johnson, sare; he die at two o'clock." Then Beppo put his finger on his lip, and motioned to Mr. Twigg not to make a noise, glancing aside at Fontenoy, as he did so.

Day passed after day—it was languor set to music. Little shadows of delirium crossed Singleton's brain occasionally; a constant phenomenon was the ringing of bells—terrible

* Doctor.

sound, when it is his own death-bell that the prophetic sufferer hears !

One night Singleton dreamed with peculiar and vivid distinctness of his friend Welwyn. He awoke refreshed : he reflected on the dream. Whence do these things come ? If I suddenly and unexpectedly dream of a particular loved soul, is it by accident or chance ? The world is full of law ; it must be by some power—perhaps some divine and mysterious power, as certain and inexplicable as the influence of a star ! May it not be that the loved soul is dreaming of us, or thinking of us, too, at that moment ? At least, let us try and find love in our philosophy whenever we can, as the astronomer longs for and watches that famous observation in his science—the passage of Venus across the sun's disk !

Singleton was musing on such thoughts in the forenoon, when Beppo came running to the bedside, “A *padre* ask for you, sir.”

There appeared round the corner of the

screen Father Adda. Beppo saluted him with all his native reverence for the order ; Singleton held out his hand.

“ My son, this is sad ; you have my prayers.”

He sank upon his knees by the bedside, and remained there for some moments ; when he rose, Singleton placed his hot dry hand in his. The priest gazed at him very kindly ; Singleton’s thoughts turned to Ivy : he began to wander—suddenly he said,

“ Father, you know Bokkar ; near there is the place where *she* lives,—she, Miss Welwyn, must know that I am ill.” He looked at Adda as he spoke, puzzled, and for a moment forgetting him ; a haze succeeded : when he saw clearly again, the priest was gone.

Singleton began to recover, and to creep back into health again. He left his bed ; at first he used to lie on the sofa, and read a little. By degrees he began to appreciate the

full benefit of Messrs. Twigg and Bigg's society : they were still "recovering"—Twigg from a musket-shot in a smart pirate skirmish on the Barbary Coast ; Bigg, from a shattering he had given his fingers by loading a gun, when there was an unhappy and malignant particle of fire in the barrel. He did not enjoy their society much, nor sympathise with their pursuits ; they dodged about the garden of the hospital, seeking for opportunities to smoke "on the sly,"—catching lizards by the tail,—and helping themselves to the almonds before they were ripe ! They carved their names on the colonnade pillars, and made havoc among the geraniums. Singleton could not enjoy these pursuits, his heart was too heavy, and his mind too full. Twigg and Bigg "chaffed" him. Singleton started with serious surprise at one of their practical jokes ; they affixed a cross, ingeniously made from brown paper, on his screen. Father Adda had visited him several times. He was always

studying the Father's theological books : there was gathering slowly, and with increasing force in his mind, a feeling in favour of his doctrines. And if a spirit, weary with struggle and inquiry, seeks an opiate to give it repose, what Church offers one in such an ancient and splendid chalice?

CHAPTER III.

Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height;
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang),
In height and cold, the splendour of the hills?
But cease to move so near the heavens, and cease
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted pine,
To sit a star, upon the sparkling spire;
And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley.

TENNYSON'S *Princess*, p. 151, 152,
(1st edition).

ONE morning my friend Singleton was informed that a large parcel had arrived for him. "This for you, sare," cried Beppo, with his usual grin. "What can it be?" said Singleton, commencing to undo the string.

"Perhaps present from some 'complished lady, sare," said Beppo, facetiously.

"Don't talk nonsense, Beppo."

"Ah, you far too sensible, Missa Fontenoy."

Singleton succeeded in removing the string from his package. It turned out to be a literary bundle—a parcel of treatises—*genus*, pamphlets, and *species*, tracts. Tracts! tracts of the *Society for*—diffusing something or other. Inside the wrapping-paper were these words :—"To Singleton Fontenoy, Esqr., with the compliments of the Reverend Mr. Grubb."

"Who is Grubb?" said Mr. Twigg, who had approached the table, and was looking over Fontenoy's shoulder.

"I know no such person," said Singleton, in a perplexed state.

He began to turn the productions over ; they were Protestant polemical works, "*Down with Babylon*" (2d.) "*Come out of Her*," &c.,

&c., all ferociously assaulting the Roman Catholic Church, and all to be had a few pence cheaper, if you took more than a hundred copies. The fact was, that a rumour had been spread that my hero was about to renounce the orthodox faith (as established by Act of Parliament.) Malta is a hot-bed of religious bigotry, in which, at this period, Mr. Grubb was a prosperous fungus. Romanism and Protestantism are there always at logger-heads. One Sunday, the *Reverend* Mr. Somebody preaches on the Reformation and its blessings ; instantly, an announcement appears that *Father* Somebody means soon to lecture on the Mass. The reverend preaches, and the Father lectures ; meanwhile the relative numbers of each party remain as before. Mr. Grubb, one of the leaders of the Protestants, remarkable for his zeal, had heard of Father Adda's frequent visits to Fontenoy, and had sent in these tracts which were to defend Singleton against his assaults, as sand-bags are

employed against shells. They attacked the Pope personally and coarsely, as the rabble at an election burn an effigy of their own ugly construction by way of revenging themselves on an unpopular gentleman: whether the effigy be *like*, is a minor point in such cases.

Singleton put a few of them into the pocket of his dressing-gown, and strolled languidly into the spacious garden to refresh himself in the sun and the sea-breeze. He was still weak, his limbs dragged heavily along: violent motion made his heart flutter in a death-like manner. He crawled over to a seat, and lolled back, looking up at the blue sky which swam above him dreamily; he reclined, and listened to the hum of insects, and watched the wagging of the flowers, which nodded to salute the passing wind. Then he pulled out some of the pamphlets, and turned over their pages indolently; as he was doing so, Father Adda approached. Singleton coloured a little as his eye fell on them.

"Good morning, I am glad to see you, Father Adda."

"I am glad to see you out to-day ; summer is rushing upon us in a wave of beauty."

He removed his strange black priest's hat, and bared his high forehead to the wind ; there was something in his look which contrasted very much at that moment with his stern garb and pale face.

"Have you been to Bokkar lately?" asked Singleton.

"Bokkar? yes! You seem to think much of that place ; you spoke to me of it one day when I was here before—you were very ill then."

"Did I?" stammered Singleton, colouring a little again.

"Do you not remember what you said?" asked the priest, in a low voice.

"No."

"It was confused—of course you could not."

A little puff of wind, as he spoke, blew one

of the tracts down on the grass ; he stooped most attentively to pick it up, and laid it on the seat beside Fontenoy. There was a sardonic shade, light and instantaneous, across his lips at the moment. Singleton saw it, and spoke.

“I owe these tracts to a stranger’s zeal : they came here about two hours ago.”

The priest took one of them up ; then spoke with bitter melancholy, “Free inquiry—right of private judgment ! Where did these bring *you*—where have they brought others ? Germany, the great country of the Reformation, has become now the greatest fountain of infidelity ; where those who reject God’s Mother, believe in Strauss ! In England, your Church has become a corporation, to which men grudge its income. My friend—my son, I tell you that, when under the influence of ‘free inquiry,’ a man takes up the Bible to question a faith, he places himself by that act out of the power of getting faith at all. It is egotism—

look how he will, he will see only the reflection of his own small individuality."

Singleton was silent : he felt his heart beat. Gradually and gradually he had been drawn by his studies within the enchanted web of the Roman theology ; his heart began to beat time with the stately march of their processions. An immortal being must have some immortal food, and cannot exist on the vulgar supplies of the world's day ; and therefore it is, that a curse will rest, and does rest on the nation or state that has nothing to offer to the young, but mechanical work, meanly rewarded. A nation where the word "saint" is a nickname,—which believes in no enthusiasm—which holds the religious man to be the greatest infidel of all—such a nation may enjoy the fatness of a snail, but can only expect the honour of one. If he who lives by the sword must die by the sword, so he who lives by the "till" shall die by the "till"—die to great ideas, and die to pure faith. Every human

being above the class who seem born without souls, or born spiritually blind, finds the necessity of a divine belief. If none such be inspired by those about him, or inhaled from some noble example at hand, he grows up vague and discontented ; perhaps takes to the nearest mumbo-jumbo, or gets whirled into an unhealthy cloud of mysticism, through which what natural light is in him beams dimly and unprofitably.

Singleton raised himself upon his arm. " Even so ! " he said, looking up at Father Adda's face. " For some time the thought of your religion has lain continually on my breast, as its symbol does on one that is very dear to me ! "

The Father looked grave. " Once for all, son, " he said, " beware how you mistake vulgar light of earth for light from heaven. "

Singleton paused, rather startled, particularly by Father Adda's manner.

" The convert who alone is a true convert,

and worthy of the Church's bosom, is the holy enthusiast. He must have no particle of selfishness——”

“Selfishness!” exclaimed Singleton.

“He must be ready to make sacrifices! 'Tis the religion of sacrifice; 'tis the worship of sorrow. It was in persecution and misery that our Church was founded; its enemies could not see its purity through its blood that they shed, and which blinded them.”

“I had a friend,” said Singleton, plucking a handful of flowers and flinging them wantonly in the air, “who regarded all churches as so many temporary forms of one worship—forms of one Eternal Spirit——”

“Ah!” exclaimed the priest—“Welwyn!”

“Welwyn! and you know *him*?” said Singleton, sitting up, and gazing eagerly in his face.

“He is of our Church—or, nominally so—but Right of Private Judgment has made him a dreamer without a hope! Ask your own

heart, if any belief in metaphysical abstractions—if any ‘principles’ so derived—can equal in their effect my stable and heart-held faith in a personal God, and a Communion of Saints, and all our Creed. These ‘philosophical’ dreams are very well in the study; carry them to your loved one’s grave, and see how they will console you there!”

Singleton sank back. “You have spoken well. It is true. I feel that a man gains quite infinitely even in believing the one article of Prayers for the Dead.”

“May you be guided to a humble faith in all!”

“But stop,” said Fontenoy; “you know Welwyn; you know, then, I suppose, that I am his relation?”

“I do,” said Father Adda, quietly.

“You know his sister?” said Singleton.

“Yes.”

“Sweet Ivy!” exclaimed Singleton. “The

thought of her brings life to my languid being."

A slight flush of colour crossed the priest's brow. Outlaw of Human emotion—was it that the ghost of a passion passed across him? We may kill the emotions, but their shades will haunt us.

Again Singleton rose up, and began to walk about with the Father. Father Adda was agitated.

"You are fond of her?" he said. "Of course!—she is your relation!"

"I am fond of her,—for she is my life!" said Singleton.

"The more glorious the sacrifice," replied the priest, calmly.

"The sacrifice,—the—what? Speak plainly to me now, Father, pray!"

"Well—so be it! She enters the Sisters of St. Agnes, and devotes her life to God!"

Singleton laughed,—and choked a little. "I will ask her that, *mí pater!*"

“Do! Enthusiast for religion are you? Oh, youth! how skin-deep that faith must be which can sacrifice nothing.”

Singleton was staggered, and paused. “Well, I will struggle for the right.”

“And now,” said the priest, who saw that the tears were rising in the youth’s eyes (and, perhaps, remembered what is laid down in one of Cicero’s treatises on rhetoric, that *lacrymâ nil citius arescit*), “I must go. I shall see you again.”

“Your blessing?”

“Willingly.”

He gave it, and Singleton saw his dark figure departing down the garden-walk. He turned, and wandered into the quadrangle. “I shall never recover,” he thought, “with all this agitation. And now for a glimpse at the Mediterranean!”

He then strolled away in front of the building to the height that looked into the Grand Harbour. The fortifications glittered

white in the sunlight opposite ; the wind was blowing fresh into the harbour, and the fair-way buoy was bobbing up and down like a swinging cherry. The Marina was lined with *speronari* and English and foreign craft. The luxury of Nature, after we have been pestered with thought, is irresistible. Singleton revelled in it, and longed for some active work,—something to do !

Twigg came up to him at this moment. For the first time since he had had the honour of his acquaintance, he experienced decided pleasure at his approach.

“ Well Twigg ; any news ? ”

“ News ! ” said the youth, shrugging his shoulders in a melancholy manner. “ There’s been nothing but a vessel signalled from the Palace ; but *she* won’t come in ; not she ! Of course not. It would be something to amuse us poor devils, and she won’t.”

“ Where is Bigg ? ”

“ He ! Oh, he’s gone to sleep, lucky fellow.

Beppo's eating olives. Could not we find something to amuse us?"

As he spoke the sound of a gun was heard. They both looked to the mouth of the harbour, and there was a man-of-war brig in sight. She had just rounded the corner from the northward, and was saluting the Admiral; she came tripping along with all sail set.

"What brig is that?" inquired Singleton.

Twigg looked at her. Gradually his face assumed a ludicrous degree of horror. "By Jove—it's us; it's our brig!"

"What?"

"The 'Sybarite,' 10, answered Twigg, ruefully. "She's a 'ell afloat! Old Relden, the Lieutenant in command, is a tartar. Two men hanged themselves off Galita; and there's never anything to eat, in the mess!"

Bigg joined them, and presently chimed in with his messmate's complaint. The horror of these youths was something wonderful; they foresaw an immediate discharge, for their

wounds were now well. Indeed, they rather regretted their recovery! for Dr. W——, the Surgeon, was so kind and gentlemanly, and the hospital was such a comfortable place for indolent leisure, that they dreaded going back to work and discomfort afloat; and it may be affirmed that they were right. The Naval Hospital, with such officials as Dr. W. and his Assistant-Surgeons, Doctors N. and S. W. (the last-named, one of the most accomplished men in the profession), had a value as a place of abode, irrespective of its special qualities. Many a naval man read and reflected, and benefitted morally there, to a degree far beyond his progress on board his ship. “Reprobates” took to intellectual amusements,—Higsby to chess,—and Snigsby to the French Grammar!

The “Sybarite” glided along. Presently the top-gallant sails and royals shrivelled up and struggled in the wind; then her masts beamed out as the canvass was taken off her,

like figures from which the drapery has fallen. The men swarmed aloft, and the sails disappeared in the furling as leaves before a blight of insects.

"There goes the old Syb!" said Twigg, shaking his head.

"Many a glass of grog you and I have had on board her," said Bigg, in a moralizing tone.

"I wonder what Relden's about now?"

"D——g somebody's eyes," Bigg said, calmly.

"Tea—genelmen," said Beppo.

They went off just as the "Sybarite" was comfortably posted at a buoy, to their room. Beppo produced the tea; soon afterwards the Doctor's rounds began.

The Doctor came to Singleton in his turn—felt his pulse, and looked in his face.

"You are getting round fast, Mr. Fontenot, but you must not excite yourself; is

there anything on your mind that excites you?"

Singleton hesitated: two little spots of colour dawned on his cheeks. The Doctor drew him aside.

"Hem! Mr. Fontenoy, may I ask you a question?"

"Certainly, sir, I shall be happy to answer it."

"Have you become a member of the Roman Church?"

"No, I have not—not now, certainly," answered Singleton, taken aback.

The Doctor took snuff. "I thought not," he said; "however, let me tell you it was so asserted by a priest to a person of my acquaintance—it was asserted by Father Tallotti. He said that you had been baptized, and had confessed. I will contradict it."

The Doctor went away shortly afterwards; Singleton wondered who could have made the false assertion. Father Adda was incapable

of falsehood, certainly ; but who could have told this Father Tallotti anything of the sort ? He sickened at the idea of being played off as a tool by a faction.

At sunset he went again into the garden, and walking in solitude, had a long meditation on his past life ; he thought of the attachments he had formed before the one which now engrossed him. Every true lover has these little loves before the great one comes ; they are like those pretty pieces of carved wood which Columbus found floating in the Atlantic, forerunners and signs that he was drawing near his great goal, and approaching the end of his wanderings across the Ocean.

He returned inside, and then sat down, and with the fresh sweetness of the summer night still lingering about his senses, wrote the following note :—

"To IVY.

"DEAREST IVY,

"Do you wonder that I have not come to see you? I have been ill—I am still weak, but write to me, and make me well;—lift me with your gentle hand from the brink of the grave.

"I have felt this evening unusually happy; I know—I feel that it is well with you. Write to me, Ivy; my heart beats at the thought of you, as a bell that rings for prayer.

"Father Adda has been with me to-day; I have spoken to him of you—he knows you. Is *he* then the confessor whom you have mentioned to me? He talked of the Sisters of St. Agnes. Ivy, ask your own heart *if you love St. Agnes as much as you do me?*

"You have said that it was your *duty* to sacrifice yourself; what impulse *can* be diviner than attachment? Heaven is holier than a temple! The fairest objects can only reflect

something from above. Dearest Ivy, what would even your beautiful blue eyes be, if there was *no light*?

“Yours, ever and ever,

“SINGLETON.”

He folded the note up, and sealed it, and then consulted the faithful Beppo how a messenger could be found to take it to Bokkar. Beppo procured one, and it was sent.

A few days passed, and there was no answer ; Father Adda did not visit him. He heard no news from the “Cleopatra ;” he began to be weighed upon by a sense of impending ill-fortune. Thanks to his youth and strength, he had shaken off the fever, and his mind now marched forward out of its shadow : he felt that eager longing for action natural to bold youth, when the pulses beat like a hammer, and the sea-breeze brings the wild rose flying to the cheek, and the spirit feels that desire to bound into stormy work—that

longing to leap which is inspired in a wild being by the sight of a stormy wave!

It was a beautiful morning : Singleton was discharged from the hospital. He took a boat at the stairs, and in a few minutes was gliding along the Grand Harbour ; in the centre of it a steamer, obviously just arrived, was lying, hissing away her angry breath in a white column. Boats were swarming round her ; a white union-jack, the signal for a midshipman, flew saucily out from the "Cleopatra's" peak. The Maltese boats, with white awnings spread, laboured along the water ; the harbour was all alive with the noise of boatswain's pipes, bells, shouts, and the laughter of divers.

When he reached the "Cleopatra," he found many officers walking about on deck. Singleton stared round him. The first person whose eye he met was Toadyley (brother of Toadyley of the "Patagonian,"—they are a numerous family)—who was mate of the upper

deck. He was moving smartly fore and aft, bullying the after-guard, peering at the hammocks, &c., as usual.

“Hillo, Toadyley!”

“Oh, Fontenoy! how are you?—back.”

Mr. Toadyley spoke without cordiality, and hurried off to see to some work or other. “Now,” thought Singleton, “I *know* that I am in bad odour with the ‘authorities’ for something or other.”

Indeed, Mr. Toadyley was a type of a class we find everywhere, who are walking indexes of the amount of current snobbism or meanness. You know how you stand with the bigoted and servile and all their family, by the exact degree of civility you meet with from these poor eye-servers. But not only are they thus serviceable: they serve to show you how you are getting on in the world; if they stop and flatter you, be of good cheer—you are mounting the world’s ladder. Do they nod and grimace, you have made a little hit. A

man can't climb a tree without getting his clothes rubbed—the flattery of the Toadyleys is the necessary dirt : they are wonderfully useful.

Singleton walked aft, and reported himself to the Commander. Under the poop, three or four of the clerks were sorting the squadron's letters, which had just arrived in the steamer ; white leather bags discharged their contents—a voluminous mass of letters dotted with black and red wax, papers in brown wrappers, &c. As Singleton reached them, the clerk said, “You're just in time!” and handed him a bundle.

He withdrew between the guns ; there was the familiar aspect of the county paper, a letter in a strange, business-looking style, and one from Welwyn, in his large and fine handwriting, like a masculine woman's. But he looked in vain for the Fontenoy crest : it was now a considerable time since he had heard from his father—he was beginning to be

seriously alarmed about it. He did not like the aspect of the strange letter : altogether he made a singular resolution—he would go on shore, and read his correspondence quietly in the country. Reader, be wise,—if you have a misery, take it out of town, air it in the fresh breeze, let it lose itself in the woods—drown it in the river. If you are poor, go out of town to be poor ; you can wear rags without a blush, only in the sight of God !

So Fontenoy got leave to go on shore, took with him an Elzevir, as in former days, and landing on the Marina, passed that way out of the gates of the town.

He lay for some time on the grass, in a garden at one of the little villages of Malta. Presently he got up, seated himself at a table under an awning of the inn, sipped some lemonade, and opened the letters.

He rose up, with the blood thumping in his temples, and the summer spinning before his eyes ! He had learned all—all that Welwyn

had heard from his father, as we recorded it at the time ; learned that terrible news from another quarter, also ; learned, that he stood there,—he, Singleton Fontenoy,—under the Southern sun, the penniless child of disgrace !

And there was an astonishing paragraph in the newspaper,—a paragraph that made Singleton stare at it, wondering if he was actually reading the English tongue.

It would be a pity to mutilate it ; here it is, entire :—

“ MARRIAGES.

“ ON the ——th instant, at St. Peter's, Cheltenham, by the Reverend Fletcher Brown, John Singleton Fontenoy, Esq., of Heatherby, to Priscilla, relict of the late Lieutenant-Colonel Harcher, C.B., of the 2nd Timbuctoo Dragoons.”

CHAPTER IV.

Sem.

What is life?

'Tis not to stalk about and draw fresh air,
From time to time, or gaze upon the sun,
'Tis to be free.

ADDISON'S *Cato*, Act 2nd.

HE rose up from his seat, and left the house. Nothing could give his mind relief but violent motion. This was, indeed, a crisis! He thanked God that there was no one there to see him blushing. Truly it would be a fine story, for those who loved scandal, that Singleton Fontenoy,—he who prided himself on his lineage, and smacked

of the fine gentleman, was a—bastard! He dwelt on the word with a curious interest,—on the word itself, in all its offensiveness,—with that sort of interest which takes people to see executions and other horrors. Now, it began to be plain to him why he had heard no mention of his mother! People don't like to allude to their youthful follies. Doubtless she had been a pretty girl, and there was an end of it. The subject presented itself, to his mind, in a hundred aspects.

First of all, here was a very good reason why his father and he had never heartily sympathised. Mr. Fontenoy, though he had first adopted him,—perhaps from some impulse of remorse,—could of course not be expected to look with all the interest of a father on a youth who could not succeed to the family estates; he was not the kind of man. Then how natural that he should have sent him to sea, where he was out of the way!

And, of course, the marriage had clinched it ! He was now an outlaw, and virtually an exile ; and, apparently, the best thing he could do was to go to Algiers, and join the French Army. He could trade in his blood !—and as for Ivy !—but when he thought of her he was fairly beaten, and he sobbed aloud.

Then a sudden reaction took place in his feelings. Son, or bastard, or whatever he was, he had a soul, and was born a free inheritor of the glories of creation. All these regrets were the pangs of wounded vanity and folly. He would stand upon his own individuality, and face the world by his proper power.

In this frame of mind he entered Valetta in the evening. As he walked down Strada Reale, he saw the figure of Father Adda before him. It suddenly struck him that the Father must know something of that strange, confused web of family history in which he had been imprisoned so long. He

came up behind him, and tapped him on the shoulder ; Father Adda turned sharply round.

“ Good evening, Father ! It is a fine evening. I have something to say to you ! ”

The priest, as he fancied, seemed somewhat embarrassed. *He, too*, had heard the news, thought Singleton, and cared little about a convert with no broad lands.

“ Good evening, my son.”

“ Turn down this way, please,” said Singleton, taking his arm, at the corner of a street, at the end of which gleamed a patch of sea.

“ I have some duty——” began Adda.

“ The duty to the poor is imperative,” said Singleton, drily. “ One word.” They turned the corner. “ I am anxious, and weary ; my heart is languid, and my head hot ; you will pardon my abruptness, therefore. What I have to say is this : you know the Welwyns ; you know they are my relations. I ask

you, simply,—do you know anything of my mother?" He coloured a little as he spoke the last words.

"Much,—all! but, stay, Mr. Fontenoy; come to me, to-morrow! I have duty now." He glanced round, with embarrassment, again. In his excited mood my hero pressed him beyond the borders of his usual courtesy.

"Father Adda; I have had a shameful letter. You will scarcely believe it, but I am told that I—I—am not my father's legitimate son!"

Father Adda started with unfeigned astonishment. "Pshaw, Mr. Fontenoy!" Then he paused; his eyes brightened for an instant, and he resumed. "I see! The motive of this assertion is obvious: they grudge the lands of Heatherby——."

"Heatherby! Then you know——."

The Father's countenance changed. He went on. "Know!—'tis my business to know! But time is short. They grudge the lands

of Heatherby to one who aspires to submit himself to the Old Church,—the Cybele of Religions!”

Singleton’s lip curled. “Mighty Mother—would she dirty her fingers with the soil!”

Adda winced. “Come; these sneers are not you. But wait till to-morrow! I must go now; the wind rises——”

“The wind rises!” exclaimed Singleton; “and what is the wind to you?” One flash of light suddenly dazzled his mind;—this haste of the priest’s had some reference to Ivy!

“Good day,” said Adda, and moved away. “What! Mr. Fontenoy, do you follow me?”

“Yes,” said the youth, doggedly, “our fates are bound together; I follow—go on.”

“Then,” said the priest, stopping short, “then you call down a malediction, and may ——”

As he spoke, with the air of one who raises

and poises a weapon, a third person joined them : it was a friend of Singleton's—Julian Linley, who was now staying at Malta, *en route* to the East. He absorbed Singleton's attention for the moment, and in that moment the Father disappeared.

“ Why, he's gone,” exclaimed Singleton.

“ Well,” said Julian, drawing his arm round Singleton's, “ well, let him go. His church is going !”

His gay laugh—musical enough for one to dance to—made Singleton start, and look confused—

“ The world's dread laugh,
That scarce the stern philosopher can brave,”

is more impressive, more potent than a funeral bell. Let any one come fresh from an idealist's writings into a drawing-room full of people ; how stable and strong everything looks, when the whole universe a minute before seemed a kind of dream ! Singleton felt

strangely troubled, and half his aspirations, and even his sorrows trembled, and seemed ready for flight at the sound.

“ You are mopish,—*frons læta parum*,” said Julian ; “ come, I have passed through these strange humours. To-night I wish you to come with me to a ‘reception,’ the most original and select in the island : there will be men of fame and learning there—will you come ?”

“ Yes,” said Singleton, decidedly ; “ yes.”

The Baron —— that night had a drawing-room full of great people and strange people. A veteran diplomatist about to proceed to the Brazils as Minister from the Court of Portugal was there, so subtle and so gentlemanly. He was the most plausible of Ultra-Tories, and prepared to demonstrate that the serfs of Russia were the happiest plebeians in the world. Nicolas, he said, was the father of his people,—not a compliment, thought Singleton, if he resembled some parents. Near him was

a traveller from Mesopotamia, and goodness knows where, who had lived among ruins for years, domesticated like a lizard. There was there also one of the most distinguished of Irishmen, the wittiest of scholars, and the most scholastic of wits—Praxis,—with libraries in his head, and comedy on his tongue. He knew theology as well as a bishop, and in translating Horace, rivalled even the graceful and lively Bon Gaultier. The Democritus of travellers moved conspicuous in the company; he was then resting at Malta, in the course of those travels which, as recorded by his pen, were one long line of pleasant light.

Singleton was peering in at a cabinet where there was a collection of medals, when Julian came up to him, accompanied by a tall man of most intellectual aspect. Julian mentioned his name, and Singleton instantly recognised before him a crack scholar and writer, one of those dangerous and dexterous critics and wits whose pens are arrows—whose

laughter shakes thrones! Next to meeting the maiden whom we love, the most delightful human pleasure is meeting the great man we reverence. Singleton was flattered and dazzled; he blushed and stammered. The great man put him quite at his ease with a few sentences; he was not the kind of person who began displaying his talents at once like a peacock spreading his tail, as some people do.

They talked for some time, and presently lighted on the subject of the Roman Church.

“So you were nearly a convert, Linley tells me?”

Were! Singleton felt awkward; he said that he certainly had changed his views about it very much since he had been studying some works on the subject.

“Ah, they showed you the necessity of a rule of faith, gave you a dose of Wiseman and Milner preparatory to Bossuet and Bellarmine; showed you a Papal tree, with every Pope since St. Peter.”

"Yes," said Singleton.

"They demonstrated—I suppose you have not dipped into Baronius?—the falsity of the story of Pope Joan: proved they had been misrepresented and calumniated, that they did not kill so many people, and that the last religious executions in England were by Protestants."

Singleton nodded, and felt inclined to smile. The speaker took an ice from a tray handed by the servant at that moment, and partaking of it with gusto, continued,

"Did you make an excursion among the Fathers?" ——

"He prefers the daughters, I fancy," broke in Mr. Julian Linley, facetiously.

"*Tace improbe!* Well, the æsthetic influence came in to back the polemics. You were enchanted by the antiquity, the beauty of the establishment, its splendid illustration by the arts. Oh, these wonderful pretty faces of ladies who were mistresses in private life, and

became virgins on canvass! *Enfin*, had you really sufficient reasons given you to induce you to step back across two centuries, and reject a religion under which England has become one of the most prosperous countries in the world?" ——

Something called away the speaker, and Singleton was again left by himself. He mused in a drowsy *nil admirari* manner. Presently the same distinguished gentleman passed near him again, and asked him if he had seen any of the works of Carlyle?

"No, not any," answered Fontenoy.

"Read Carlyle, and see what you think of things in general, then."

Singleton was once more left by himself. This time he observed an old gentleman, who appeared like a doctor, watching him very curiously. Who could it be? The old gentleman crossed over to him; he seemed somewhat feeble: he was very aged, and his bald head shone like a nautilus shell. He came up

to Singleton, and asked his name. Singleton answered him.

“Turn your head a little that way, my young friend.”

Singleton obeyed with increased surprise. The old man took off his spectacles, wiped them—put them on again.

“Your mother, my young friend, she was not English—not of English name?”

Singleton’s face grew hot. “No, I think not!”

“Her name was Adda?”

Singleton started back, and his voice faltered. The conversation with Welwyn, and Welwyn’s story, and the mention by him of the A —— family rushed to his mind. Now, at last, he fancied he saw all!

“I think—that is—yes,” he answered. Strange to say, the old man seemed scarcely less moved, particularly as he said that he too knew her long ago!

A servant came in at that moment, and

approached the old gentleman. "His Excellency's carriage is ready!"

He started, and feebly stammering to Singleton to come to him next day, bowed vaguely to the company, and departed.

"Julian!" said Singleton.

"Well, what's the matter, man,—have you seen a ghost?"

"Who—who was that old gentleman here just now?"

"Don't you know? The Cardinal Pira—one of the most distinguished scholars in Europe; thirty years ago he was a poor priest in this island—and as obscure as you or I."

"Let us come away: my head aches."

CHAPTER V.

O tell her, swallow, that thy brood is flown ;
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.

The Princess, p. 70.

The ocean (that kindly mother of the unfortunate)
opened her arms to receive him.

FIELDING, *Tom Jones*.

NEXT morning at daylight the hands were turned up to exercise. "Hands loose sails." The whole squadron were on the alert,—men were seen hopping up the masts like woodpeckers. The Commander took his station on the poop. There was a pause, and silence, and the men crowded to the bulwarks, waiting

for the order to "man the rigging." The midshipmen of the tops took advantage of the period to run up first,—it is not pleasant to have a huge fellow climbing over you, and treading on your fingers with his bare horny feet! That was all well enough for Benbow and Jervis—but it won't do for the Strawberrys, the Dulcimers, and the Welbys of our more civilized day!

The Commander glanced round the other ships of the squadron, to see fair play in the race; the signal officer turned his glass on them. "There's some fellows in the 'Jupiter's' tops, sir," he said.

"Signal 'clear tops!'" said the Commander. In a few minutes up flew the balls—out blew the flags. That was a snub for the squadron, and relished accordingly.

Men were observed coming down the rigging in most of the ships.

"What's the 'Orson' about?"

"She has loosed sails, sir."

So she had! Poor Captain Gunne, of the "Orson," being in a confused state of mind, had loosed sails before the time, and was ordered to furl again forthwith—to the intense amusement of the squadron.

"Man the rigging.—'Way aloft!"

The shrouds throbbed like nerves,—away went the men,—the tops grew black with figures.

"Trice up." Up go the studding-sail booms, looking as clean as peeled almonds.

"Lay out." The men swarm along the yards, and the foot-ropes dance under them. Meanwhile, you hear through the silence of the vast work, the shrill, squeaking voices of "youngsters" in the tops, giving orders, with a noise like penny trumpets.

"Let fall." Down drop the sails. Then there is a "pipe down," and the men come thumping down the rigging again, leaving the sails drooping in graceful folds.

The Commander kept pacing the poop as

before, when he abruptly stopped. "What is that signal up at the palace?"

The signal officer started—he had not seen it. He turned his glass on it. "*Brig in distress off the harbour's mouth.*"

"Call away the pinnace and second cutter. Main-top there; Mr. Welby, come down. Mizen-top, there; Mr. Fontenoy, come down." Fontenoy and Pug came tripping down the rigging like rope-dancers; Fontenoy came quickest,—Pug being of opinion (contrary, by the way, to the Commander's ideas on the subject) that a certain dignified moderation of pace was becoming in an officer.

The pinnace was manned, and taken charge of by Pug,—the cutter by Fontenoy. They shoved off, with orders to see what was the matter with the brig, and to offer her assistance.

"Give way," they both cried, and the boats slashed along, abreast, down the middle of the harbour.

“Fontenoy,” said Welby, “what can be the matter with her here? The weather ain’t so very bad.” Indeed, it was a fine moderate breeze enough.

“Goodness knows,” answered Singleton.

“Distress!” growled Welby, who was not over-pleased at being bored with such a job. “I suppose the fellow’s liquor is all out.”

The boats shot past the “fair-way” buoy, and Singleton rose in the stern-sheets to look round.

“There she is, sir!” said his coxswain quickly, and pointing with his finger.

There, sure enough, was a brig—a common-looking English brig, with a dirty white stripe. Her topmasts were snapped off, just above the caps, where appeared only their ragged stumps; she had had a smash on the larboard bow apparently, for some of the bulwark that had been knocked away was hanging by a few fibres, and showed a white wound.

"There's a picture!" cried Welby, with disgust. "Give way, men."

The boats bounded forward. The pinnace went alongside her on the starboard side, the cutter on the other,—and Singleton and Welby reached the deck at the same moment.

"Come on board—half the pinnace's crew," cried Welby, putting his head over the gangway. The men jumped up. The little skipper, a small, demure man, with a knowing eye—one of the cunning crew who delight "serious" owners by staying, when on shore, at Sailor's Homes, listening to Marine Missionaries, and singing doggrel hymns in the cable tier,—touched his hat to Welby.

"Why—how the devil did you get into this plight?" said Welby, looking round. "Coxswain, take the brig's helm,—put her before the wind. Now, hands get out the spare topmasts,—mast-ropes up to send the stumps down. What, is there a leak, too?"

The brig's men were working away at the

pumps,—some of the boat's crew were put to them; work was set going with man-of-war promptitude.

"You can't go to sea, now," said Welby to the skipper.

"Oh,—I hope so, sir!" As he spoke, he backed against the stanchions of his cabin-ladder, placing himself between Welby and the descent.

"Pshaw, man; do you think we are going with you to —— where are you going?"

"To Palermo."

"To Palermo! You must put in to refit again."

The little skipper turned pale, and looked uneasy.

Welby moved forward, and urged the men who were at the pumps; the broken topmasts were sent dangling down, and spare ones put in a fair way of being run up. He came back to where the skipper was still standing:

"You had better come forward with me and look at the bulwarks."

"Yes, sir,—oh, yes," he said, in a flurried way.

"The brig got run into last night, did she?"

"Yes, sir. We left the harbour at sunset; the wind was contrary. Middle o' the night, a man-of-war brig was standing across our bows, and tacked just before she reached us; she had too much way on, and so just thumped us, while she was in stays."

"Ah,—the 'Roarer,' I suppose," muttered Welby. He moved again to go forward, but, looking back, saw the skipper still standing by his cabin-ladder.

"Come on, man,—what are you waiting for?"

Again the skipper appeared agitated, but he moved this time, and went shuffling forward. "A nasty piece of business," said Welby, looking at the effects of the smash. "Sharp

there, with the fore-topmast ;—boats a-head to tow.”

Half of each boat’s crew got into the boats, and pulled a-head.

“Singleton !” cried Welby. He ran aft, and found Singleton standing near the cabin skylight.

“What is the matter, in heaven’s name, Fontenoy ?”

Singleton made a gesture like a startled tiger, and bounded to the after-ladder ; at the same instant the captain of the brig came running aft. “You can’t go down,—you must not go down !” and flinging himself before him, opposed his passage.

“What does this mean ?” asked Welby, in astonishment.

“I heard a voice below, just now,” said Singleton. “Answer me this,—you have a passenger on board—a lady ?”

“What is that to you ?”

“Let me pass !”

“You shan’t.”

“Fool! I wear a sword.”

His arm moved,—there was a gleam like white lightning. The terrified skipper flung himself, in a round ball—like a hedgehog—down his own stairs; he thundered against the cabin-door, and there was a cry from inside—the voice of Ivy!

Singleton stood upright and calm, (Welby remembered his look long after the Maltese circles had ceased to tattle about the strange career of the Enthusiast,) and said, “You take the brig in;—I accomplish my destiny.”

He stalked down the ladder, burst open the cabin-door, and there was Ivy! The brig’s captain picked himself up, and went on deck again. There was a trampling and thumping overhead, as the work went on; and the youth and maiden were left alone.

Singleton threw his sword down on the deck.

“ So you would have left me, Ivy,—without a word of farewell ! I did not expect it.—You have a heart ! ”

The light from the miserable skylight of the brig’s cabin showed how pale Ivy’s features were ; and under those deep, deep blue eyes—eyes which, in the dark South, are as refreshing to see as sky to the captive,—was a shade like the shade of a leaf. Ah, Singleton, it did not become you to reproach one who had suffered so much, and so purely !

“ You received my letter, did you not ? ”

She pulled it from her bosom.

“ There ! I would not have kept it,—but I thought I might, as I was not to see you again.”

She sank back upon a sofa in the cabin,

which had been in various ways adorned for her, as Singleton saw on glancing round.

He sat down on the deck at her feet, and kissed her hand. "It was Father Adda who arranged your departure ; you were going to Sicily ! I have been very miserable, Ivy,—but I see hope dawning ; the ship is going back to the harbour. Fate has caused this delay. Promise—say, Ivy—that you will not go away from the island again, but as mine ! Renounce the cursed soul-prison to which they would persuade you ; worship with a happy being, and a joyous loving soul ! The little bird that flies nearest heaven is the gayest in its song !"

She was silent, but her bosom heaved in a wave of love and tenderness.

(Meanwhile, the noise went on, on deck. The vessel heeled under a breeze,—there was a rattling of ropes and spars.)

Singleton looked up at her face as he knelt. Her fingers blushed at his loving touch! Suddenly he clasped her to his breast. "You are mine, Ivy, for ever; your heart cannot say no. Do not sin!"

She rose up proudly.

"To disobey the heart, *that* is the worst sin!" continued Singleton.

She stooped and deliberately kissed him on the forehead. Like the seal of the angel in the "Revelations," that kiss made him a holy servant for ever.

Then, they sat and murmured to each other like leaves on a tree in summer.

Ivy's form trembled with a sudden violent coughing.

Singleton started to his feet. At the door there entered a Spectre—a long grey volume of vapour, like the rising of the Genii in the "Arabian Nights;" at the same moment the

skylight above them shivered, and the glass hailed down in a tempest.

“Singleton!” roared Welby; “*Fire!*”

“Ivy, come,—you are mine. I can face anything *now*.”

They bounded on deck together. The brig had caught fire; she was a mile from the harbour, and the wind had set off the land. There were some casks of turpentine on the forecastle,—one of them had got spilt,—fire caught it, and away went a living stream of it, hissing—blackening the deck—splashing into the sea.

Welby jumped up on the bulwarks, holding by the topmast back-stays. “Singleton, look after the girl! Leave the rest to me. Cutter and pinnace come alongside! Haul up the courses!”

Welby was quite cool. It is always the way with dandies, idlers, and all the genus.

Why should we grudge a man his betting and billiards, if he is equally ready for tempest and war?

Singleton stood with Ivy at the starboard-quarter, between her and the smoke, which was drifting in hot flakes aft. "Be composed, dear. One minute, and the boat——." Ivy stood in a petrified calm, like a torrent frozen in the leap. Meanwhile, the brig's crew were galloping desperately fore and aft, seizing things and dropping them again in terror. The skipper staggered backwards and forwards like a man in a fit; and the fire cracked along below the deck, like the running of innumerable rats. The smoke rose thicker and thicker. Even in that moment, Singleton had calmness to see that spectators were gathering in Forts Elmo and Ricasoli, on both sides of the harbour, to see the spectacle,—the nautical *auto-da-fé*!

“ Cutter under the quarter ! ”

Singleton lifted up Ivy like a baby, clambered on to the bulwarks with her ; the coxswain seized her,—“ now, marm ! ” he cried, and in another minute she was, half-fainting, in the cutter’s stern sheets.

“ Shove off, never mind me ! ” cried Singleton.

“ Go, Singleton,” cried Welby. “ To the boats, everybody ! *The fire wins !* ”

There was a thick, pestiferous, heavy smoke now, and the fire began to roar. The masts lighted like candles. Splash after splash was heard of men jumping overboard. Singleton bounded into the cutter. Last of all, Welby leapt into the pinnace. The men in the water were picked up ; the heavily-crammed boats pulled slowly away from the burning wreck.

“ A pretty, d—d morning’s work,” said one of the pinnace’s crew.

“ Silence, fore-and-aft,” cried Welby. “ Skipper,” he added, slapping the little man who was in the boat with him, with his head between his knees, on the shoulder, “ look at the brig. You won’t see her any more !”

There she was, to leeward of them, tossing in the sea, and writhing like a tortured snake. The flames soared, glittering up the masts, which fell bit by bit ; the sea all round her hissed sadly ; then, — she collapsed into charred timber, and was scattered upon the steaming waters.

“ Cheer up, old fellow,” said Welby, to the skipper, “ you ain’t the owner, I suppose.”

“ The Lord ish a man o’ war !” muttered the skipper, incoherently, while a laugh ran through the boat’s crew. The skipper was drunk. A tremendous pull at a brandy-bottle when the fire was discovered, had settled *him*.

“ Give way !” cried Pug Welby, relapsing

into his old *insouciance*. “D—n it, I’m getting peckish!” he muttered. “Give way, men.”

They were met at the mouth of the harbour by several of the squadron’s boats, which were hurrying to their relief. Singleton went with Ivy into the first cutter of the “Jupiter,” the midshipman of which was a friend of his, and asked him to land them at Valetta. He left his own boat to return without him to the “Cleopatra.”

When they landed, Singleton took Ivy to an hotel, where he was known; there, proper attention was paid to her. He left her alone in a suite of rooms, and sallied out. It was a morning when years seemed crowded into an hour!—years of work he had to do,—for he was now in the crisis of his fortune,—and that day was the heart of his life.

He first sought out the old lady who had

lived with Ivy as guardian, and who was to have followed her in the next vessel to Palermo, where Ivy was to have taken the veil. He sent her to the hotel.

Then his next work was to keep his appointment with Cardinal Pira. One hour he was there : and as he passed out of the portals of the courtyard, his eye was bright with pride, and his tread seemed the echo of power. Turning the corner, who should he stumble against but—Father Adda! The calm mild look of the priest showed a night spent in study and devotion—a morning, ignorant of all that had made it a morning for the youth before him. He accosted Singleton most kindly.

“ Well, Father, good-day. I am afraid I was hasty last night. Your pardon ! ”

“ Granted, willingly. I can imagine your feelings.”

“ Indeed ! ”

“ Yes. You were no doubt agitated by what you had heard. Now—I think that a satisfactory process——”

“ Enough. I will not trouble you. No, my *dear relation*.” The priest started, and his brow was shaded by a touch of colour. “ I am not ashamed of the blood of *Adda*. Now I know why I am somewhat warmer than my brethren of the North ; why, sometimes, my veins seem to run wine ! ”

“ Well, you forgive me my secrecy.”

“ I forgive you all, *now*. Join me at the —— Hotel, in an hour ! But Father,—Father, see ! ”

Father Adda turned abruptly, and saw before him the Captain of the brig that had perished in the fire !

Fontenoy returned on board the “ Cleo-

patra" at six o'clock that evening. Everybody stared at him.

"Fontenot, you're in for it."

"Fontenot, you're in a frightful row."

"Who is she, Fontenot?"

"Fontenot, when are you going to be baptized?"

"I wonder he don't blush to be called Fontenot when he knows what we know," whispered Toadley.

"He owes Mordecai two hundred," returned Snobby.

"Steward," said Singleton, "some hock and Seltzer water."

"The service is going to the devil," said Toadley, in a marked tone.

"That's lucky for you; he'll likely promote you when it gets there," said Singleton, dipping into the beverage. There was a laugh.

"Mr. Fontenoy wanted." It was the Quartermaster's familiar voice.

Fontenoy went on deck accordingly. He found himself brought before the Captain,—old Ricksby,—the Commander,—and a clerk ready to take notes. *That* smacked of a court-martial; gun fired at 8 P.M.; union-jack at the peak; Captains in full dress; and ignorance and bigotry stark naked!

To be brief, he found himself charged with neglecting his duty in not coming on board in the cutter, and with "insubordination," which means, generally, that the offender has shown a disposition to resent offensive insolence from some harsh superior. It was put to him,—stand a court-martial, or leave the "Cleopatra!"

He chose the latter alternative, and to the astonishment of everybody, joined the "Sybarite"—that "hell afloat." He made the

choice deliberately : he wanted work—he wanted healthy excitement. Relden who, besides the second-master, had nobody but our acquaintances, Twigg and Bigg, on board, snapped at him. Singleton joined her, had a cabin to himself (one good thing, at all events), and found himself in a scene of dirt, noise, and cockroaches.

A few days afterwards a signal was made from the flag-ship for “Sybarite” and “Caitiff” to go outside, and try rate of sailing. The “Caitiff” was another brig, then in harbour, commanded by Kraggles, M.P., a little man, part prig, part *roué*—or *roué* turned regular, and made even somewhat duller than before by the process—as soiled linen gets spoiled by severe washing. Having become member for a corrupt borough, he turned Government hack, —gave silent votes in the House, and made loud professions out of it ; in due time got a

command, and delivered Parliamentary speeches to his ship's crew, with the capstan for a red-box. Poor little Kraggles!

The brigs weighed, Fontenoy "carrying on" in the "Syb," and Ivy watching her from the shore. The "Sybarite" was a Symondite, and worked like a weathercock. Off the brigs went in line, like two couples going "down the middle" of a country dance. It was a fresh breeze, with smooth water—just the combination for a Symondite! The "Sybarite" slashed through the waves like a knife through cream-cheese; tacked as fast as they could haul the main-yard; went three miles to windward of the "Caitiff" in the first hour they tried it on a bowline! It came on to blow hard—they double-reefed. The "Syb" played at fisty-cuffs with the head sea, soused everything fore and aft, beat the "Caitiff," and beat even the porpoises! The brigs bore up to

try "going free." Up bore the "Sybarite," began to roll some thirty-five degrees, and to groan as if she was sea-sick—Symondites will. They shook a reef out ; beat the "Caitiff" on her best point. "Never was such a triumph," said everybody.

Never, indeed ! for it soon became evident *why* the trial had been ordered. Artful Sir Booby Boosing, K.C.B.! Immediately that the report of the "Sybarite's" triumph was made, she was ordered to "prepare for sea," and received instructions to proceed to relieve the "Cowslip" on the West Coast of Africa !

CHAPTER VI.

Hunc labor æquus,
Provehit, et pulcro reddit sua dona labori.

JUVENAL.

FONTENOT TO WELWYN.

"SYBARITE," GIBRALTAR,
4th ——— 184—.

* * * * *

" . . . AND thus, my dear Welwyn, light broke suddenly upon the darkness which had been gathering round me. This Cardinal Pira —this strange old man, whose acquaintance I

made by an accident—was the priest who performed my father's marriage ceremony! You will find everything necessary in the documents which Ivy brings with her to England, in charge of Mr. Branton. People will say that this stroke of fortune was by an almost incredible incident. Well, it is natural for the common-place to believe in the common-place! Be it so.

“I suppose you will not see my father. I confess that I cannot understand what looks so like malignity on his part; my follies and extravagances, bad as they were, were scarcely potent enough impulses. It seems to me that his worldly pride has all his life been shocked by [the remembrance of his early love-match. That a man should be ashamed of having been true to God and Nature! See what a Nemesis presides over affairs! I inherit from the enthusiasm of my mother's race. What was good

in the marriage has blended itself with my nature—what was bad has avenged itself in his repentance. What sort of lady is the *noverca*? 'Twas a fine match, I suppose: *she*, perhaps, would like to rob me of my inheritance for her offspring. But these considerations are trivial; I pardon everybody and everything. I believe in the grand old ancient doctrine, that a man's fortune is in himself.

“You would laugh if you could see me in my wonderful cabin in this brig. I have leisure here to think: I retrace my career. What absurd follies—what pretensions and affectations! Yet, this I must say, *each folly was a spiritualism*, the offspring of some misguided spiritualism, but of spiritual origin, still! My search after pleasure was a misled love of beauty—each affectation was an aspiration distorted. I have never ceased to have hearty

affection for my fellow-men, and, above all, reverence for the Great.

“This life does me good : it is rugged as a path on the Alps ; but in the silence and the solitude of the waters there is great healing. There is a noble beneficence in work. The first thing that happened to mankind was their getting turned out of a garden, and it sometimes occurs to me that it was the greatest piece of luck the race ever met with !

“I have not much time, on board here, for reading, but I have a few choice spirits in my cabin. I have taken the advice of a literary man whom I met at Malta. I read C. Great in what he teaches, great in what he suggests, greater than all in what he *inspires*—that man has called from the depths of my being what good lay buried there, with a voice as ’twere the trump of a resurrection angel ! The

error of our time is not that of admiring too much, and therefore I am the more enthusiastic in what I say now. Have you read *Sartor Resartus*? What glances of insight—what solemn music—what rays of true beauty and tenderness are there! As for C.'s attacks in some of his works on sordid strongholds, *we* can appreciate them—we who know what kind of thing is the firing of shot and shell!——

* * * * *

“The wind is rising—we sail to-night; a short time will bring me into a scene of strife and danger.——Do you know visions sometimes come across me of a future naval expedition as noble as those of Blake—as that of the Argonauts? I think of you and myself as serving in a fleet—greater than a war fleet, greater than a *mere* mercantile fleet—carrying to rich solitudes the elements of greatness—

carrying out the members of a colony fired with the spirit of a nation ! . . . But I must break off ; we are going to bend new sails, and the fore-yard wants looking at.

“ Farewell, dear friend,

“ Yours, faithfully,

“ SINGLETON C. FONTENOY.”

CHAPTER VII.

O quid solutis est beatius curis?

Quum mens onus reponit, ac peregrino

Labore fessi venimus Larem ad nostrum!

CATULLUS, *Carm.* 31.

Oh, what more sweet than the release from care?

Where the mind lays its burden down, and where,

Spent with far travel, we come home and spread

Our limbs to rest along the wished-for bed!

BON GAULTIER'S *Trans.*

TIME has passed. We make a leap across its gulf. It is not a very wide leap, but it must be made. We now find ourselves in the

gunroom of the flag-ship at Portsmouth. The time is the "Ministerial crisis," prior to the coming in of the present Ministry.

A strange sight a mess during a ministerial crisis! Promotions being dealt by alternate Governments to their friends, in turn, a Ministerial crisis is a naval crisis also. All the Government gentlemen are anxious; all the Opposition, eager. There are gentlemen sick of longing, and gentlemen dying for change. Everybody whose father has had a faithful promise from Sir John,—everybody whose aunt is the bosom friend of Lady Mary; the many whose families "have always stuck to the party, by Jove, sir!" are in a terrible state of excitement.

Many of our old acquaintances, long variously dispersed about the world, are met in the flag-ship's gunroom. Lord Strawberry, who has become a pretentious mate, is there,

eager for the advent of Lord John, and his friends to power. Pug Welby has turned up, once more, a Lieutenant, with a premature gout. Box, after being "spun" for his gunnery examination three times, has passed at last. *He* is not agitated by the crisis; his parents' views in politics are of a peculiarly violent order. Box must take his chance;—he would probably be promoted at once if Mr. Feargus O'Connor got the Treasury. Poor Box!

The gunroom table of the "Elephant" was covered with papers, with a few bottles of pale ale here and there. The more anxious gentlemen were walking backwards and forwards. The morning mail had not come down.

"I knew it," said a strong Tory (*—i. e., the son of one—*) "Peel can't stand. After abolishing the Corn Laws, what can you

expect? *I* knew he would fling the party overboard, long ago. D—n it, he might promote his old friends, though, before going out.”

“He’s a traitor,” said little Nobby, a Protectionist youngster, fiercely. Nobby’s mamma was a peeress in her own right,—as Nobby was a fool in *his*. Nobby had been in the Royal yacht for some time, where he turned out in miraculous rig,—where, as he asserted, Her Majesty loved his intellectual conversation! Nobby spoke of Prince Albert as a “brick,” and gave you to understand that he had proved himself to him (Nobby) to be a good judge of cigars.

“When the Whigs were tottering in 184—, they promoted twenty fellows in a batch!” said a mate.

“That’s what I call public spirit,” said Pug Welby, who had come down from

the ward-room to hear what was going forward.

“Peel’s conduct was not nautically correct,” said Snigg (still clerk, punster, and “boozier.”)

“Why?” asked somebody, lazily awaiting the jest.

“A breeze arose, and he opened the ports. That’s the way to swamp a ship!”

“Ugh,” exclaimed a melancholy Tory.

A midshipman came running in. “Steward, a glass of swizzle! I’ve got to board the ‘Sybarite;’ just back from the Coast, you know.”

“‘Sybarite,’” said Welby, pricking up his ears. “Who has her?”

“Fontenoy,—acting.”

“Why, hang the fellow,” said Pug, “he was only a midshipman when he went out.”

“Ah, you see, Relden died of the fever,—

doosed civil of Relden ! Fontenoy had passed ; the Admiral gave him the acting command."

" You knew Fontenoy, Welby ?"

" I should say so !" said Welby, involuntarily kicking out the leg that " Æneas " had broken for him.

" Hang it, here's the boatman !"

The door opened. There was a rush. The letters and papers were seized. There was the news ! " Formation of a Cabinet." All up with the Peelites and Tories !

Strawberry ordered a bottle of Champagne.

" I'll take some rum-and-water on the event," said Snigg ; " not for my own sake, but for the sake of the country !"

There was the sound of a " call ;" they were piping the side, on the middle deck, for somebody.

“ Mr. Welby, a gentleman wants to see you.”

Welby went up on the middle deck. There was his visitor,—a tall young man, somewhat sunburnt, with blue eyes and dark hair. Welby stared ; he remembered some face like it, but softer and more boyish.

The stranger came and shook him, ferociously, by the hand ; “ God bless me, Pug, don’t you know me ? ”

“ Fontenoy ! ”

They shook hands again. “ Come to my cabin,” said Pug. “ You are darker, and more staid-looking. Your voice is changed.”

“ Ah,” said Fontenoy, “ I can’t say ‘ vox—et præterea nihil ! ’ ”

“ D—n it, just the same fellow,” said Pug. “ Come on.”

They laughed, and walked hastily along to Welby’s cabin ; and then began the habitual

interchange, so lively and so melancholy. Where is old ——, and ——, and ——! Who is dead; who has “gone to the dogs;” who has made unmentionable marriages? One feels the thrill of memory as one writes of it! Where is fair-haired Frank, with whom I jested and played—he whom I loved so well on the shores of the old Corcyra. He died on the deadly Coast, and the sea-nymphs made rings of his hair.

“Pannikin is dead—died of the dropsy,” said Welby.

“Ah!”

“Times are changing,” went on Pug, moralizing; “everything changes but my aunt.”

“You are the same fellow as ever, I see,” laughed Fontenoy.

“*She* never changes! Empires perish, but she remains immoveable—like a mummy—d—d like a mummy!”

Singleton returned on board soon ; he had to pay off the brig, and was confoundedly pestered about the "books," which had to be "made up." The Admiralty confirmed his "acting" appointment, and he emerged in the world a full-blown Lieutenant. He hurried up to town, we may easily believe, at no ordinary pace, doing everything "regardless of expense," for to say nothing of his private means, he had a considerable sum of prize-money due to him for capturing the "Santo Pokero" slaver with five hundred slaves on board.

He came back from his agents to his hotel ; his father was in the north : he scarcely knew where to find anybody, and was ignorant entirely of the localities of the metropolis. However, he recollected Mr. Frederick Lepel, M.P., and sought his name out in a "Parliamentary Companion," where he found the following :—

“Lépel, Frederick, Huskdale, son of A. Lepel, Esquire, of Dunreddin, Rockshire, first returned 184—, on liberal principles” ——

Singleton grinned.

—— “Is attached to the principles of the British Constitution, and will suffer no infringement of it, further than may be necessary to the great principles of progress. A free trader; will agree to an equitable Church reform. Author of a ‘Letter on the Currency,’ ‘Cotton v. Cant,’ and other pamphlets. Rockshire, Dunreddin; Grosvenor-street; Albert Club, —— Square; Calico Club, Piccadilly!”

“Bravo, Fred!” soliloquised Singleton, as he read this imposing paragraph. Without heart or genius (though one could not speak harshly of ‘such a good fellow’), Fred was now a “prosperous gentleman.” He entered the House an easy liberal—watched his time, spoke a little good sense, seasoned with

jocosity ; got on ;—coquetted with the League—watched that ;—subscribed 50% to it in the nick of time—was advertised to be at one of its Covent Garden meetings, but fell ill in the afternoon. He was now watching the crisis, and speculating whether his liberalism was the right quantity for a Whig official.

Singleton took a cab, and was driven to Grosvenor-street. Frederick was “at home,” was just going to dine ; asked him to dinner—indeed, he gave him a hearty recognition, and was civil in the extreme, particularly talking away to amuse him, and being very lively.

“Well, Frederick,” said Singleton, quietly, as they began dessert, “have you seen my father lately ?”

“Eh ? why no ; the truth is, we are not on over good terms.” He looked flurried a little.

"Where is Welwyn—do you see him sometimes?"

"Not exactly—no; he is out of my way. However, I helped him to getting his commandership: you know he is a commander?"

"Yes."

"It was through me. Lord Belden got him appointed to the Royal Yacht—a good thing for a young man! Lord Clangour, I mean—you know the old Earl is dead?"

"I had not heard it."

"Yes,—awfully sudden."

"Let me see,—you were just getting friendly with Lord Belden, when I left home."

Frédéric looked down at the plate before him, and inspected the plumage of the cockatoo. Singleton had touched on a failure.

"That's all over," he said, with a sort of memory of a sneer on his lip; "there was Augusta to thank for that!"

"She refused him?"

"Yes,—coronet and all! Not that the 'all,' or anything but the rank and fortune, was worth having."

"I thought you rather liked him."

"Oh—a little. But, hang the fellow, with all *his* chances, to be beaten by Welwyn!"

"Welwyn is a very superior person, and most certainly as much a gentleman as any man in the empire."

"My dear sir, we are all gentlemen, and some of us superior persons. That is not sufficient."

"I suppose your sister liked Welwyn, at all events."

"She has been at some pains to show it," said Frederick, drily.

"How do you mean? Welwyn, I know, of course,—though I am a stranger to all the

particulars,—of course, I say, behaved most honourably.”

“Yes, no doubt; that was all the worse, perhaps. If he had given me a loop-hole!” said Frederick. His eye brightened, and he balanced the nutcrackers, in a peculiar way, between his fore-finger and thumb, and across his hand.

Singleton felt disgusted, and involuntarily moved his wine-glass a little way off.

“Well,” continued Frederick, in a tone that seemed to show a wish to close the subject; “the thing’s done. With his profession, her eight thousand of her own, and whatever means he may have,—they must do what they can.”

“What—do you mean to say they are married?” cried Singleton.

“Just so. They live in the country,—in the domestic-virtuous style,—quite like

what you see in an epitaph! Pass the wine."

Singleton felt a joy which he did not care to show, at this news. He willingly changed the subject, and they talked away about the Slave Trade, the Arms Bill, and the Corn Laws.

In the evening, Frederick took him to a great gathering—a "brilliant" party,—one of those assemblages which Jigger, of the "Bustard," summed up in this brief description:—"places where you are infernally hot, and must not swear." Fontenoy very soon lost himself—wandered about the forest of people, and ultimately took refuge on a seat, and next to what is called a very fine woman. The lady and he got into conversation—he never knew how—and she began a sort of Semiramis flirtation with him. They talked about poetry, about scenery, about music.

"There is Mr. Lepel dancing," she said, as the conversation flagged a moment.

"Ah, so I see," said Singleton. "Do you know him?"

"Oh, yes. What wit he has!"

"Yes," said Singleton; "the family have all talent."

"You know the family, then?"

"Old neighbours of mine!" said Singleton, smiling.

"Neighbours. Oh ho! you are a Rockshire man, then!" said the lady, with vivacity.

"Just so," said Fontenoy, with a bow.

"Let me guess your name. I know all the county names." ("Queer woman enough," thought my hero.)

"Beaconsfield,—no, they're dull!"

Singleton bowed like the Comte d'Artois.

"Pierrepont, Temple, Selwyn, or Haslewood?"

“No, I must save you the trouble”—— but at that instant some female friend of the strange lady came up. Singleton resigned his seat, and moved away a little.

A couple passed close by. Singleton heard one of them say, “How well Mrs. Fontenoy is looking to-night!” He started round, and looked in the direction in which the speaker glanced. Plainly, the strange lady was Mrs. Fontenoy.

“Yes,” answered the other, “she bears their separation very well.” They laughed, and moved on through the crush.

“God bless me!” soliloquised Singleton, as he walked to his hotel——“fancy a man’s flirting with his step-mother! And they are separated, eh?”

CHAPTER VIII.

Quis deus magis ah magis|
Est petendus amantibus?
Quem colent homines magis
Cælitum? O Hymenæe, Hymen,
Hymen, O Hymenæe.

CATULLUS.

“One hour more,” said Welwyn, looking at the time-piece; “will it ever come, Ivy?”

“Don’t tease her, dear.”

“Do I look very pale?”

“Excepting that particular rose tint which you have acquired in England.”

“The scenery is not equal to Sicily, is it?” asked Welwyn, facetiously.

And yet it was very absurd; the plains of Hertfordshire are as fine as the plains of Smyrna, and *they* are called the finest in the world. Perch yourself on Shenley Hill, reader, and thank God you were born an Englishman!

This conversation took place between three Welwyns, whom we know, in the parlour of a house of quiet respectability in Hertfordshire. It was summer time,—they were standing at the window, and looking at the landscape,—except every now and then, when they looked at the time-piece.

“Fancy Singleton’s talking to his step-mother without knowing her!” said Welwyn.

“And fancy Frederick making so much of him—Frederick, who has behaved so ill to us all,” said Augusta.

‘Frederick has good points,’ said the Optimist.

“Poor Mr. Fontenoy the elder, and those horrible railways,” Augusta went on; “that was all Frederick’s doing, too. I wish people would learn the difference of meaning between ambition and getting on! Singleton is ‘ambitious’—the other wants to ‘get on.’ There is a mighty difference.”

So spoke the fair Augusta,—Ivy sighed, and went to the window. “Really, there are too many flowers in this room,—I feel quite faint.”

“Come into the air, dear,” said her brother. “Hush!”

The wind among the laurels! The wind swept through the garden, and brought a handful of apple blossoms in at the open window, and made the feathers of the poor little canary ruffle like flames of gold.

There was a sound again, harder, distincter,
—the sound of wheels.

“Here he is!” cried Welwyn.

“Let me be alone when he comes,” said Ivy, in an agitated voice.

The gate clinks,—the steps sound,—Singleton was heard talking loudly to Welwyn. Augusta ran down to see him, and received a fraternal salute. Then Ivy heard steps bounding along the stairs, and in came Singleton. He paused a moment in surprise,—all Ivy’s agitation had merged into joy and delight. “Bless me—how sweet you are grown!” exclaimed Singleton. And, indeed, Ivy was wonderfully improved; not that she was not always beautiful,—of course she was. But happiness and tranquillity of mind—their soft flow feeds beauty as the river feeds the lily. And Singleton, as he embraced her, fancied that there was all the North in the

clear lustre of her face, and all the South in the soft warmth of her lips.

Welwyn and his young wife came into the room, and the four formed a happy party.

Singleton took Welwyn's arm, and moved with him to the window, and whispered ; the girls, having nothing better to do, kissed each other.

“ You have not seen him yet ? ” said Welwyn.

“ No. We have interchanged letters, though, — we are friends again. He offers Heatherby for us to stay at ; it's too pretentious for me. You know our favourite Laman Blanchard's sweet lines.

“ ‘ It is not in the mountains,
Nor the palaces of pride,
That love will fold his wings up
And rejoicingly abide ;
But in meek and humble natures
His home is ever found,
*As the lark that sings in heaven
Builds his nest upon the ground ! ’ ”*

When you marry, reader, spare yourself the unhappy accompaniments of form and ostentation,—women that giggle, and men that make speeches. Do as my hero did, and plight your troth before God, in a village church, at a simple altar, and with a humble pastor. Nature will be kind if you are kind to her, and mock her not with carriages and champagne: thou shalt have the Muses for thy bridesmaids, and thy “favours” shall be the violet and the rose!

Here ends the story of Singleton Fontenoy. The last time I saw him, he was reading a “Latter-Day Pamphlet.”

And here wakes up the author from a dream of his youth.

THE END.

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"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."—1 PET. iii. 15.

THE recent republication of the Diary of the celebrated John Evelyn having directed attention to the manuscripts in the library at Wotton, the fruit of Evelyn's literary labours in a new and most important department is now for the first time brought to light. The work, which is entitled "A Rational Account of the True Religion," includes a condensed statement and investigation of its natural and Scriptural evidences. Suggested by the revolutionary changes, amid which he had passed his youth, and by the startling manifestations of infidelity that surrounded him in his more mature age, Evelyn, it appears, had undertaken this work to resolve in his own mind such occasional doubts as he might at any time have been moved to entertain; to satisfy himself on the various questions of religion; and to determine, once for all, what course to hold for the future. Considering the high literary reputation of the author, the extent and variety of his reading, the active benevolence of his character, and his well-known piety, the appearance of such a work at the present time is most opportune.

* * * For the Opinions of the Press on this work see the following pages.

Scarcely could a moment have been chosen, more seasonable than the present, for the publication of this posthumous work of the Christian Philosopher of Wotton, whose personal character, coupled with his erudition and depth of thought, gives more than ordinary weight to anything written by him upon the all-important subject of religion. To hear, in the midst of the din and debate of modern controversy, a voice from the grave pronouncing upon the questions so much agitated in the present day, will be a surprise to all, and to many, we doubt not, a source of much comfort. The composition of the present work originated in the desire felt by the learned and pious author to satisfy his own mind concerning the foundations of his faith, at a period which must have proved one of intense trial and distress to every earnest mind. Evelyn took in hand to review the whole subject of religion, tracing it to its fountain-head, and scrutinising at every step the evidence on which it rests. In the former part of the work he enters deeply into the metaphysical questions connected with the being of a God and the immortality of the soul, indulging, by the way, in various speculations on the nature of angels and the order of the celestial hierarchy. He then takes a view of the different systems of the pagan world, its idolatries and its philosophy, and thence passes on to the history of revelation, discussing the evidences of the authenticity and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the sense of which, according to the interpretation sanctioned by universal tradition (ascertained by the test of Vircentius Livinensis), he acknowledges as the rule and standard of faith.

Having thus laid the foundation for revealed religion, the author considers in detail its different stages, the patriarchal, the Jewish, the Christian; and the decadence and corruption of the latter through the different sects and heresies which have sprung up in successive ages. Among these, on arriving at the sixteenth century, he reckons, without hesitation, the Council of Trent, Martin Luther, and John Calvin, along with the Presbyterians, Brownists, Independents, Anabaptists, Quakers, and Fifth-Monarchy men, as well as Socinians; but dwells with special emphasis and circumstantiality upon the corruptions of Popery. Lastly, he defines the Church Catholic, and concludes that "the Church of England, reformed from the corruption of the Romish Church, and restored to primitive purity, agrees and is in community with the true and ancient Catholic faith, wherever professed at this day."

While the views and principles advocated in these volumes are of a strict and decisive Church character, the tone of moderation, in which the cause of the Church is pleaded, and the systems of her opponents are criticised, is calculated to induce a fair and dispassionate examination of the points at issue; and the work is, therefore, one likely to contribute in no small degree, especially at the present day, to the healing of existing differences, and to the vindication of the principles of our Church, alike against Romish superstition and against latitudinarian unbelief.—*John Bull.*

We are disposed to rate most highly the value of this learned, pious, and most able treatise. In it, Evelyn anticipates all the arguments of Butler, Warburton, Waterland, Paley, and Magee. As an epitome of all the later arguments against the infidelity of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the *History of Religion* is, indeed, invaluable.—*Standard.*

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The fact of the existence of Evelyn's manuscript was not a secret to those who had examined his lists of published and unpublished works; but it is due to Mr. Colburn to relate, that it was mainly owing to his suggestions that the manuscript was carefully examined, and found to be a work of considerable learning and research. It is a specimen of the good old orthodoxy of our ancestors, represented by one of the noblest of English worthies.—*Examiner*.

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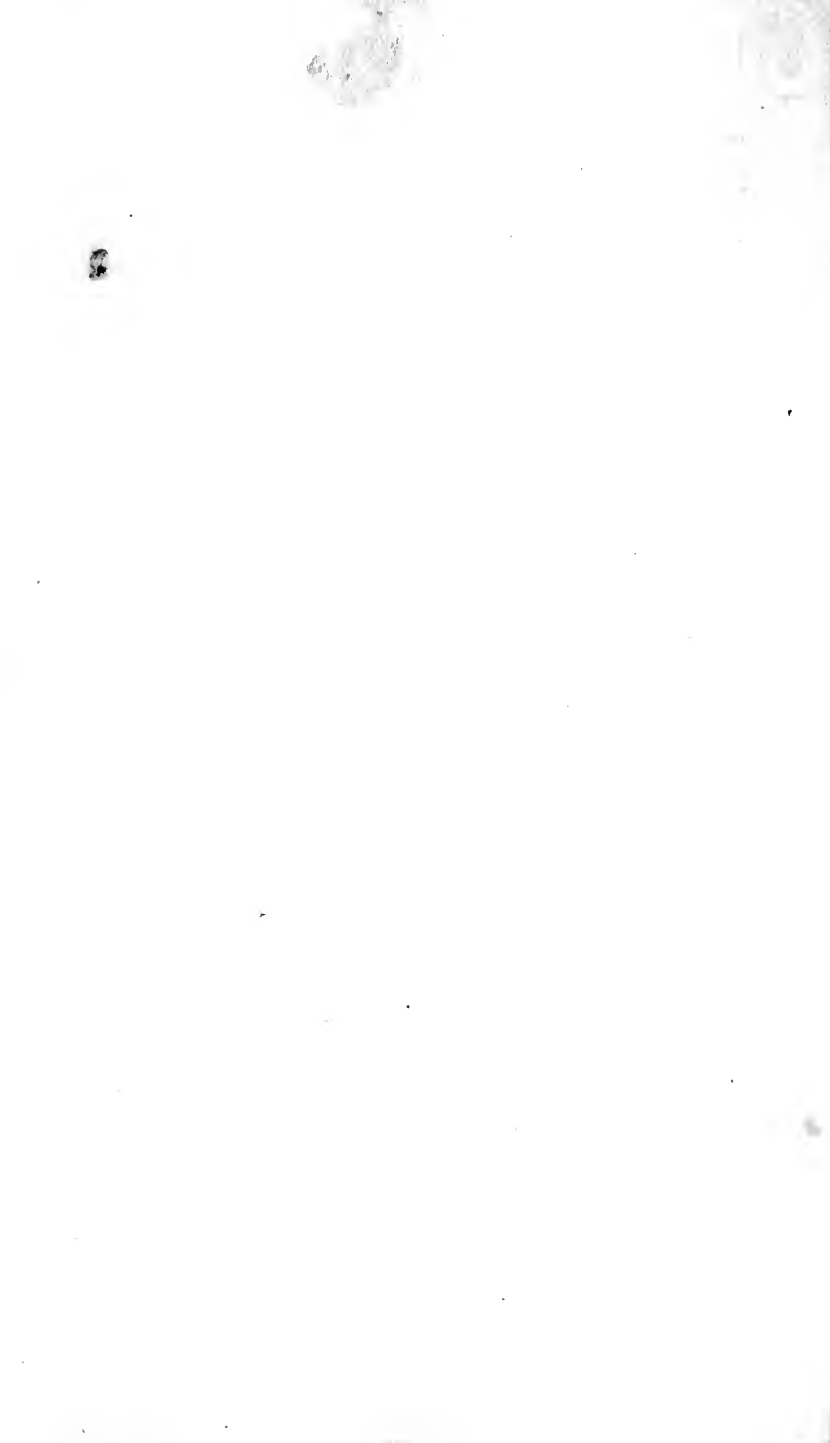
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